DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 426 795 PS 027 280

AUTHOR	Adams, Gina; Schulman, Karen
TITLE	Child Care Challenges: The Midwest, The Northeast, The South, and The West.
INSTITUTION	Children's Defense Fund, Washington, DC.
SPONS AGENCY	Ford Foundation, New York, NY.; Annie E. Casey Foundation, Baltimore, MD.; A.L. Mailman Family Foundation, Inc.; Prudential Foundation, Newark, NJ.
PUB DATE	1998-05-00
NOTE	621p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Children's Defense Fund, 25 E Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20001; Tel: 202-628-8787; Web site: http://www.childrensdefense.org
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF3 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Day Care; Day Care Centers; Early Childhood Education; Employed Parents; Family Needs; Family Problems; *State Surveys; Statistical Surveys
IDENTIFIERS	Availability (Programs and Services); Child Care Costs; *Child Care Needs; Day Care Quality; Indicators; United States; United States (Midwest); United States (Northeast); United States (South); United States (West)

ABSTRACT

This document is comprised of four separately-published volumes, each a regional compilation of several state reports examining the range of child care challenges facing families in the state. Each state report includes the following information for the state: (1) child care needs; (2) child care costs; (3) child care quality; (4) child care availability; and (5) child care facts at a glance, a summary data table providing information on demographics, family income, child care costs, and child care quality indicators. Data indicate that in every state families are struggling to find quality child care they can afford. Families face serious problems finding quality childcare because costs are too high, they cannot find the quality they are looking for, or the demands of their work schedules limit their choices. There is no state that has successfully addressed the full range of problems facing families who need child care. Each state report contains references. The regional compilations conclude by noting that the problems identified highlight the need for a significant new commitment to child care. (KB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)
☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED 426 795

THE MIDWEST:
Child Care Challenges

- Illinois
- Indiana
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Missouri
- Nebraska
- North Dakota
- Ohio
- South Dakota
- Wisconsin

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND
DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE
AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC
COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY
HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Elizabeth
Reynolds
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
2A

Gina Adams and Karen Schulman

Children's Defense Fund

May 1998

PS 027280

Overview

This report is a regional compilation of several state reports, each of which examines the range of child care challenges facing families in the state. As shown in this volume, as well as the volumes for the other three regions of the U.S., families in *every state* are struggling to find quality child care they can afford—yet face serious problems because costs are too high, they cannot find the quality they are looking for, or the demands of their work schedules limit their choices. There is no state in the country that has successfully addressed the full range of problems facing families who need child care.

The problems described in this series highlight the need for a significant new commitment to child care. Increased state and federal investments, and greater involvement from other sectors, are essential to make improvements possible. We cannot continue to jeopardize the success of working families and their children. Because of the urgency of these problems, the Children's Defense Fund and thousands of national, state, and local organizations and individuals are working together to improve the quality and affordability of child care and after-school activities for America's children and families. To learn more about these efforts, call (202) 662-3671 or visit CDF's website at www.childrensdefense.org.

While this series focuses on the child care problems facing families across the country, there are positive steps that states and communities are taking to address these issues. Many of these initiatives are described in other CDF child care publications, such as *State Developments in Child Care and Early Education: 1997.* Yet despite these efforts, very serious challenges remain in every state, and much more must be done to help parents get the quality, affordable care they need to support their families.

Acknowledgments

We are grateful to the many individuals and organizations who helped on this project. They include the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA), who worked with us to survey selected state CCR&R agencies for information on child care costs, as well as on other issues. Our thanks go to key NACCRRA members and staff—including Diane Adams, Fran Kipnis, Kirsta Millar, Yasmina Vinci, Bobbie Weber, and Gail Wilson—as well as the many state and local child care resource and referral agency staff who took the time to answer the survey and verify the information. We are also grateful to state child care advocates across the country who helped to document the child care needs in their communities and provided input on drafts.

Other individuals and organizations provided invaluable assistance. These include Marcie Whitebook and Marci Andrews of the Center for the Child Care Workforce; Andrea Camp and staff of the Lifetime Television's child care initiative "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment"; and Beth Miller, Linda Sisson, and Barbara Taylor representing the school-age child care community.

Many CDF staff members and interns helped us with this project as well. They include Neelum Arya, Helen Blank, Anourack Chinyavong, Danielle Contreras, Diane Minor, Nicole Oxendine Poersch, Elizabeth Reynolds, Daniel Stein, and Kanya Williams. We would like to extend our particular appreciation to Jody Wright, whose work was essential to this project.

Finally, we also would like to thank the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the A.L. Mailman Foundation, and the Prudential Foundation, who provided support for this effort.

Copyright © 1998 Children's Defense Fund

CDF grants blanket permission to copy any portion of this document, waiving all other applicable copyright protection, if it is to be used in work for and on behalf of children. For all other uses, please contact the Managing Editor, CDF Publications, for permission to reprint.

THE MIDWEST:
Child Care Challenges

- Illinois
- Indiana
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Missouri
- Nebraska
- North Dakota
- Ohio
- South Dakota
- Wisconsin

Gina Adams and Karen Schulman

Children's Defense Fund
May 1998

ILLINOIS:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Illinois parents.

- Every day, about 660,600 children younger than six are in child care in Illinois if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Illinois work to help support their families. An estimated 59 percent of Illinois mothers with children younger than six, and 76 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Illinois and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]
- When the Illinois Statewide Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agency surveyed 3,000 families who had received help finding child care, the agency found that more than two out of five of the parents who responded had experienced problems with the cost of care, availability of care, and/or the quality of care.[6]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Illinois.

Child care is costly for many families in Illinois.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Illinois in 1997 was $3,525[7]—just over two-thirds the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center.
- Many families in Illinois earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Illinois with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 920,460 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[8]
- In Illinois, child care for one four-year-old in a child care center cost $4,921 on average in 1997. The cost of care in Chicago (Cook County) was even higher—care for a four-year-old

in a center averaged $5,304 per year, with fees as high as $13,000 per year.[9] These expenses are for only one child—parents with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Illinois[10]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Chicago (Cook County)	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$6,987	$13,260	$8,268	$13,260
4 years	$4,921	$13,000	$5,304	$13,000
8 years[11]	$3,402	$10,816	$4,587	$10,816

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Chicago (Cook County)	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,600	$15,600	$5,460	$15,600
4 years	$4,242	$14,560	$4,836	$14,560
8 years	$2,767	$15,403	$4,587	$15,403

- The "typical" family in Illinois earns about $26,000 a year (the income level below which about half of all Illinois families fall). For this typical family to buy child care for an infant and a four-year old in a child care center at the average price in Illinois, they would have to spend 46 percent of their income for child care.[12]

Many low-income families in Illinois are unable to get the child care assistance they need to help their children thrive.

- Despite the fact that Illinois has doubled its spending for child care since 1995, the state's investment is still insufficient and many families remain unable to pay for the good child care their children need. The state spends only $2.70 out of every $100 of state general revenues on child care and early education. Although research clearly demonstrates the importance of brain development in the first years of life, Illinois spends over five times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[13]
- In 1997, Illinois guaranteed child care assistance to all families earning less than $21,819* (for a family of three). While providing this guarantee is a very important step, problems remain. Illinois ranks in the bottom 20 states as far as its income eligibility cutoff for child care assistance. As of January 1998, 31 states allowed families with higher incomes to receive state subsidies. Illinois' cutoff is lower than the cutoff in a number of nearby states, including Michigan and Minnesota. *[Families being served before July 1, 1997—when new income cutoffs went into effect—are eligible for assistance if earning up to $26,230 per year.][14]
- As part of the new guarantee, Illinois lowered the amount that a family can earn and still qualify for child care assistance. As a consequence, there are many low-income families who have been receiving child care assistance but are now losing this key support. These families are faced with untenable choices—either they must come up with the full cost of child care out of their meager incomes, place their children in less costly (and poorer quality) settings, quit their jobs, or ask for a pay cut so they can meet the new income standards.

The lower income limit for child care assistance has created serious hardships for many hard-working low-income families in Illinois

Melissa, a young mother of a four-year-old daughter in Chicago, will lose her child care assistance July 1, because, according to the new state law, she earns too much money. But she does not earn enough to afford child care on her own. "I have no idea what I'm going to do. Without this child care [assistance] I wouldn't be able to work," she said. Melissa works as a secretary in Chicago and earns less than $9 an hour. With the help of a child care subsidy, Melissa pays $37 a week for child care for her four-year-old daughter Valerie, who attends North Avenue Day Nursery on Chicago's Northwest side. Without the child care subsidy, Melissa's child care cost would almost triple to $105 a week (about $5,500 a year). The child care subsidy was a great help to Melissa while she finished high school, got a job, and got off welfare. But when the new income cutoffs were established last year, Melissa's income put her over the limit for a child care subsidy by about $1,000 a year—or only $83 a month.[15]

* * * * * * *

Doreen, a mother of two boys in Wheeling, figured she was getting ahead when she got a new job recently and a $6,500 a year raise. Child care assistance has allowed her to pay about $1,400 a year for her two boys (ages three and seven) to attend Horizon's Children's Center in Wheeling. But the raise could cause her child care costs to increase by roughly $9,500 a year—a price she cannot afford—because her increased income put her over the state limit for child care assistance. Her children's last day at the center is May 8. She is considering having them live with her mother in Michigan because she cannot afford to pay for child care.[16]

* * * * * * *

Aisha lives in Schaumburg and is a single mother of a one-year-old boy. She makes $8.91 an hour or $18,533 a year, an income that—under the new state law—means that she earns too much to continue to get child care assistance. Aisha currently pays $37 a week for child care at Community Child Care Center of Palatine. Without a child care subsidy, her costs would almost quadruple to $185 a week, a price she cannot afford. She has put her name on waiting lists of less expensive day care centers. And she is considering working over time so that she can pay for child care. "I was really happy about my son's day care. They're great and my son loves it," Aisha said. "When I leave him with my family, he cries. But when I leave him at the day care, he's like 'I'll see you later.'"[17]

- Although research has clearly shown the importance of education and training in helping families improve their skills and increase their earnings, in 1997 Illinois severely restricted access to child care subsidies for parents in school or in training. Low-income parents in Illinois are not able to get child care assistance if they are in school or training, unless they are on welfare or are a teenager in high school.[18] This effectively makes it very difficult for low-income parents to get the education and training they need to get ahead and to get better-paying jobs.

Eliminating child care help for parents seeking education makes it difficult for them to get the skills and training needed for better-paying jobs

Renee Penn, an Evanston mother of two, has worked for years at a series of low-paying and temporary jobs and cycled on and off public assistance. She recently decided to return to school full-time in order to complete a BS in nursing. Penn is looking for a part-time job that is flexible enough to accommodate her demanding school schedule. "I'm trying to break the cycle," she said. Financially, Penn is able to attend school only because of the help of a child care subsidy. But come next July, she will lose her subsidy as the state's new child care policy no longer provides child care assistance to families in school—unless they're on welfare and then only in limited circumstances. "I feel like I'm being held down," Penn said. "I want to be able to care for my family myself without any assistance." In two years, Penn could complete her nursing degree and achieve financial independence. But, faced with the loss of her child care subsidy, Penn must make a difficult choice. She can return to public aid and hope that her caseworker will approve her education goals and provide a child care subsidy, or she can leave school and return to low-wage work where she can get a child care subsidy. Either way, she will end up getting public assistance for a longer period of time and her efforts to become financially independent will be jeopardized.[19]

Even when Illinois families receive assistance, they face limited options due to inadequate state policies.

- Families in Illinois who receive child care assistance still face enormous difficulties finding providers who will take care of their children, as the amount the state will pay for care is far below market prices. A comparison of the amount the state will pay to the amount that providers actually charge shows that the current Illinois state rate is as much as *57 percent* below the market rate for care.[20] The consequence of these extraordinarily low rates is that many providers are unwilling to care for children receiving help from the state, thus limiting parents' options for good quality child care.

- The state payment rates are lower than the rates charged by most providers in communities throughout Illinois. For example, in the suburban Chicago area of DuPage County, virtually all of the family child care providers and child care centers charge more than the state reimbursement rate (100 percent and 98 percent respectively).[21] In suburban Cook County, 90 percent of family child care providers and 80 percent of child care centers charge more than the state reimbursement rate.[22] Even in the small city of Rockford, three-quarters of the family child care providers and half of the child care centers charge more than the state reimbursement rate.[23]

- Those few child care programs that do serve children whose care is subsidized often face a greater demand than they can handle. For instance, the Day Care Center in McLean County, whose costs are covered through government subsidies and other donations, serves 100 children and has an additional 80 children on the waiting list.[24]

Low state payment rates force providers to refuse to serve children receiving subsidies

LaGrange Park resident Antoinette Jenkins was on the verge of quitting a brand new job that had ended her five-year stint on public aid. The single mother could not find child care that cost what the state subsidy paid. She had struggled to find a licensed family child care provider to care for her three-year-old son. One provider charged $131 a week to care for him, but the state subsidy was only $66 a week. Then Jenkins' six-year-old son reached the maximum age for care at a local subsidized day care center, and she could not find another provider who would accept a state subsidy. Finally, she found a neighbor willing to watch both her sons at a lower cost. But instead of learning new things as they were in licensed child care, her children now watch TV most of the day. "I had to settle for this because that was all I could afford," she said. "There was no other choice. The job I have is the beginning of a career and I want to stay on it."[25]

* * * * * * *

With her boss's approval, Laura Bishop leaves her dry-cleaning job in Bloomington a couple of hours early every Wednesday to drive across town, gather her three daughters from two different child care centers, and then drive them back across town to her job. There they wait—quietly, Bishop hopes, but that's not always the case—to be picked up by her ex-husband. Later in the evening when her work is done, she picks them up at his house and takes them to hers. Every Wednesday feels like a difficult, distracting, aggravating and wearying tug of war for Bishop. It's also the day with the least complicated child-care solution of her work week. Her job is helping her get off public assistance, but so far it's coming at an unexpected family cost. "It's the best we could come up with after three or four different tries in the last couple of months," Bishop said. "But it's a far cry from what we had." Bishop's world tilted last year when she was sent scrambling to find new care for her two youngest daughters, ages two and four, while she worked. Unable to absorb mounting losses due to inadequate state rates, her child care provider stopped caring for children from families like Bishop's who are receiving state subsidies, and gave her 30 days to find a new arrangement. As the director of her program noted, "It costs us $24.07 a day to serve a preschooler. But the state's reimbursement rate is only $15.65. We can't keep our doors open if we continue serving the number of subsidized children we have in the past."[26] *Three months later, Laura Bishop still has not been able to find a satisfactory solution.*[27]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Illinois are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Illinois affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[28] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[29] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[30]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care need to be strengthened in Illinois.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Illinois' children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Illinois—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Illinois' children from harm.

- Illinois needs to strengthen its licensing protections for children. In 1997, although the state met recommended numbers of children per staff member for most age groups, it allowed one caregiver to care for as many as eight two-year-olds (age 27 months) in a child care center with no other adult. In contrast, early childhood experts recommend no more than four to six.[31] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, play, and care for eight active two-year-olds alone, much less be able to give the children the one-on-one attention they need to thrive or to be able to ensure their safety in an emergency such as a fire.

- Despite clear licensing rules in Illinois, the system for monitoring and enforcing those protections is weak. Child care providers are frustrated by backlogs and delays, some waiting as long as one year to get a license approved. Licensing representatives are overwhelmed by huge caseloads, and often are unable to make the required annual visits.[32]

High turnover rates, low wages and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although barbers must complete 1,500 hours of training and nail technicians must receive 350 hours of training to be licensed in Illinois,[33] the state is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[34]

- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100).[35] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Illinois was only $14,900.[36] National studies of child care providers find that they also tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[37]

- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers; nationwide, about one-third of child care teachers leave their centers each year.[38] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers are only 6.6 percent.[39]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Illinois.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in Illinois. In 1997, only 225 of Illinois' 2,725 child care centers—or 8 percent—were accredited.[40] This includes 113 of the 1,026 licensed centers in Cook County, and only two of the 88 licensed operating child care centers in southern Illinois.[41]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Illinois face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

Many families in Illinois have trouble finding good child care in their communities.

- Parents need child care that is available during hours that match their work schedules. Such care is often difficult to find, though. For example, fewer than 8 percent of the spaces in Illinois' state prekindergarten for low-income families provide services for a full working day—making it difficult for low-income working families to participate.[42]

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Illinois school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Illinois families with school-age children are low-income and need help affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 399,748 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Illinois live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[43]
- Illinois children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[44] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[45] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[46] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.

Families have difficulty finding quality, affordable after-school care

Patty Larue is a single mother of three sons in the Chicago area. Larue, whose sons attend an after-school program at the Albany Park Community Center, brings home about $1,100 a month from her job as a Head Start teacher but spends more than half that on rent alone. She already has cut out family movies and trips to Navy Pier to make her child care payment. She is unsure what the coming months will bring, given the increased parent fees required by the revised Illinois sliding-scale fee structure for families receiving child care subsidies. "I'm struggling, I'm working and I'm just trying to do right," said Larue, 26. "It's just too much for us to pay when we're paying everything else." Some child care centers have reported dropout rates as high as 30 percent or more due to the increased parent fees, while others have seen no change. The greatest number of dropouts can be found in families with school-age children who are leaving them to take care of themselves instead of sending them to after-school programs.[47]

- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Illinois, less than one in five public schools (3,884 or 18 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[48]
- Further evidence of the shortage of school-age care in Illinois is provided by national studies that have examined the adequacy of child care in selected areas, including Chicago. For example, a 1995 study of child care in selected cities across the country reported that there was an inadequate supply of school-age care in Chicago,[49] and a recent study by the General Accounting Office (GAO) of the U.S. Congress found that only 23 percent of the known demand for school-age care in Chicago can be met by the currently known supply.[50]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Illinois.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[51] This means as many as 81,100 babies in Illinois are in child care if national patterns hold true.[52]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Illinois' young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Illinois to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Illinois in 1997 averaged $6,987, but could cost as much as $13,260.[53]
- In many communities, infant care is difficult for parents to find. For example, a 1995 study of child care needs in selected cities across the country found serious shortages of infant care in Chicago.[54]

The shortage of affordable, quality child care will be a growing problem as more Illinois families try to move from welfare to work.

- The welfare law requires Illinois to have half of its welfare caseload working at least 35 hours per week by the year 2002. This figure is almost twice the number of families on welfare currently working. The supply of child care must similarly increase in order to accommodate the growing number of low-income working families.[55] In Chicago alone, experts estimate that at least 30,000 new child care spaces will be needed to meet the increased demand resulting from the welfare law.[56]
- If the supply of affordable, quality child care remains inadequate, attempts to reform welfare are likely to fail. Various studies demonstrate that the lack of child care can serve as an insurmountable barrier preventing welfare clients from getting and keeping jobs. A 1991 study of single parents receiving welfare in Illinois found that child care problems kept 42 percent from working full-time, 39 percent from looking for work as much as desired, and 39 percent from going to school.[57]

- Even when child care is available, it is likely that it will not be available when families struggling to leave welfare need it. Nearly three-quarters of women leaving welfare report work schedules that include nights, weekends, or rotating shifts, while only one-fifth of licensed child care programs in Chicago are open before 6:00 a.m. or after 6:30 p.m.[58]

Some families confront multiple barriers that make it impossible to find care

Raymond Clampet of Bridgeport has searched fruitlessly for a child care provider to watch his two children (ages nine and 10) from 10:30 p.m. to 7:30 a.m. while he works. The difficulty he has had finding child care during the third shift is compounded by the fact that one of his children has cerebral palsy. Clampet's mother is temporarily helping with the children. "Working third shift, there's no help out there," said Clampet, who makes car seat parts for a manufacturing company. Having a child with cerebral palsy does not make things easier. "People see him, they see the wheel chair and they think they need a doctor's degree but he's just a boy inside," he said.[59]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Illinois

Number of children younger than one[60]	180,238
Number of children younger than six[61]	1,100,980
Number of children ages six to 17[62]	2,054,925
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[63]	81,100
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[64]	660,600
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[65]	59%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[66]	76%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Illinois

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[67]	920,460
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Illinois[68]	$3,525

Annual Child Care Costs in Illinois[69]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Chicago (Cook County)	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$6,987	$13,260	$8,268	$13,260
4 years	$4,921	$13,000	$5,304	$13,000
8 years[70]	$3,402	$10,816	$4,587	$10,816

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Chicago (Cook County)	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,600	$15,600	$5,460	$15,600
4 years	$4,242	$14,560	$4,836	$14,560
8 years	$2,767	$15,403	$4,587	$15,403

Many Children in Illinois Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Illinois require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[71]	Yes
Does Illinois require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[72]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in Illinois in 1996[73]	$14,900
Percentage of child care centers in Illinois that were accredited as of 1997[74]	8%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Illinois[75]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[76]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	5	3-5	Yes
27 months	8	4-6	No
3 years	10	7-10	Yes
4 years	10	8-10	Yes

Other Child Care Indicators in Illinois

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[77]	2,725
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[78]	197
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[79]	9,162
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[80]	18%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Illinois Statewide Child Care Resource & Referral, *State of Illinois Aggregate Report, Fourth Quarter, FY 1996-June 1997* (Chicago, IL: Illinois Statewide CCR&R, June 1997).

[7] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[8] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[9] Information from the Day Care Action Council of Illinois, Chicago, IL; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[10] Information from the Day Care Action Council of Illinois, Chicago, IL; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[11] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[12] Data on median income from The Day Care Action Council of Illinois, personal communication April 1998.

[13] Data from The Day Care Action Council of Illinois, personal communication April 1998.

[14] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[15] Parent Stories from the Day Care Action Council of Illinois, May 1998.

[16] Parent Stories from the Day Care Action Council of Illinois, May 1998.

[17] Parent Stories from the Day Care Action Council of Illinois, May 1998.

[18] Data from The Day Care Action Council of Illinois, personal communication April 1998.

[19] Day Care Action Council of Illinois, "Restoring Eligibility," *Child Care In Illinois, Unfinished Business*, (Chicago, IL: Day Care Action Council of Illinois, 1997).

[20] Day Care Action Council of Illinois, *Thriving Children, Striving Families , Executive Summary* (Chicago, IL: Day Care Action Council of Illinois, with collaboration partners, 1997).

[21] Illinois Child Care Resource & Referral Network, *Report, April 1997* (Chicago, IL: Illinois CCR&R Network, April 1997).

[22] Illinois Child Care Resource & Referral Network, *Report, April 1997* (Chicago, IL: Illinois CCR&R Network, April 1997).

[23] Illinois Child Care Resource & Referral Network, *Report, April 1997* (Chicago, IL: Illinois CCR&R Network, April 1997).

[24] Brummer, "Emphasis on kids welcomed," Bloomington, IL: *The Pantagraph*, January 8, 1998, p. A5.

[25] Day Care Action Council of Illinois, "Raising Rates to Increase Parental Choice," *Child Care In Illinois, Unfinished Business*, (Chicago, IL: Day Care Action Council of Illinois, 1997).

[26] Kathie Raiborn, Director of Rogy's Child Care Centers, Inc., in Peoria, IL—cited in Day Care Action Council of Illinois, "Raising Rates to Increase Parental Choice," *Child Care In Illinois, Unfinished Business* (Chicago, IL: Day Care Action Council of Illinois, 1997).

[27] Hilyard, "Child care caught in the fray," Peoria, IL: *The Journal Star*, February 8, 1998, p. A1.

[28] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[29] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[30] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[31] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, MA.

[32] Communication from The Day Care Action Council of Illinois, April 1998.

[33] Illinois Kids Count, *Learning Begins at Birth*, (Chicago, IL: Voices for Illinois Children, February 1998), p. 5.

[34] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[35] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[36] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[37] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[38] National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW).

[39] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[40] Information on number of accredited programs from the Day Care Action Council of Illinois, collected through a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. Information on number of licensed programs from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[41] Information from the Day Care Action Council of Illinois, Chicago, IL; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[42] Day Care Action Council of Illinois, "Critical Facts," *Child Care In Illinois, Unfinished Business*, (Chicago, IL: Day Care Action Council of Illinois, 1997), p.3.

[43] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[44]School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[45] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[46] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[47] Kiernan, "Child-care reforms don't work for all," Chicago, IL: *Chicago Tribune*, November 3, 1997, pp. 1, 12.

[48] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[49] Clark and Long, *Child Care Prices: A Profile of Six Communities—Final Report* (Washington, DC: The Urban Institute, 1995), p. 72.

[50] U.S. General Accounting Office, *Welfare Reform: Implications of Increased Work Participation for Child Care* (Washington, DC: May 1997).

[51] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[52] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[53] Information from the Day Care Action Council of Illinois, Chicago, IL; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[54] Clark and Long, *Child Care Prices: A Profile of Six Communities—Final Report* (Washington, DC: The Urban Institute, 1995), p. 72.

[55] Day Care Action Council of Illinois, *Thriving Children, Striving Families, Executive Summary* (Chicago, IL: Day Care Action Council of Illinois, with collaboration partners, 1997).

[56] U.S. General Accounting Office, *Welfare Reform: Implications of Increased Work Participation for Child Care* (Washington, DC: May 1997).

[57] Siegel and Loman, *Child Care and AFDC Recipients in Illinois* (Illinois: Illinois Department of Public Aid, 1991).

[58] Day Care Action Council of Illinois, "Critical Facts," *Child Care In Illinois, Unfinished Business* (Chicago, IL: Day Care Action Council of Illinois, 1997), p. 3.

[59] Day Care Action Council of Illinois, "Building the Supply of Good Quality Care," *Child Care In Illinois, Unfinished Business* (Chicago, IL: Day Care Action Council of Illinois, 1997).

[60] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[61] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[62] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[63] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[64] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[65] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[66] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[67] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[68] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[69] Information from the Day Care Action Council of Illinois, Chicago, IL; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[70] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[71] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[72] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[73] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[74] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[75] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[76] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[77] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[78] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[79] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[80] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

INDIANA:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Indiana parents.

- Every day, about 295,900 children younger than six are in child care in Indiana if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Indiana work to help support their families. An estimated 64 percent of Indiana mothers with children younger than six, and 77 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Indiana and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Indiana.

Child care is costly for many families in Indiana.

- Child care costs more than a college education at a public university. The annual cost of public college tuition in Indiana in 1997 was $3,200[6]—less than the average cost of care for a four-year-old in much of the state and significantly less than the average cost of care for an infant.
- Many families in Indiana earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Indiana with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 497,490 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[7]
- In Indiana, child care is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. The average cost of care for a four-year-old in 1997 ranged from $3,224 in the southern part of the state to as much as $6,084 in some areas of central Indiana.[8] These expenses are for only one child—parents with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Average Annual Costs for Child Care in Indiana (1997)[9]

Age of child	North/Northwest Indiana	Central Indiana	Southern Indiana
12 months	$3,900 - $4,680	$3,952 - $8,580	$6,500
4 years	$3,380 - $3,900	$3,848 - $6,084	$3,224
8 years[10]	$3,628 - $4107	$3,422 - $4,860	$2,909

*Note: This information is based on the cost for child care centers and family child care homes.

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old at the average price in northern Indiana, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *34 to 40 percent* of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in Indiana are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Indiana ranks among the bottom third of all states in making low-income families eligible for child care assistance. As of January 1998, 37 states allowed families with higher incomes to receive state subsidies. Only those low-income working families earning less than $19,995 (for a family of three) are eligible for child care help across the state,* although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $33,890. This cutoff is lower than in a number of nearby states such as Michigan, Illinois, and Wisconsin.[11] *[Counties have the option of serving families earning up to $25,327 per year, which is still significantly below the level allowed under federal law]
- Even with Indiana's low-income cutoff, many hard-working families who are eligible are unable to get child care assistance due to inadequate funding. While the state has reduced its waiting lists over the past year, 32 out of 92 Indiana counties still have waiting lists.[12] Research has shown that parents waiting for child care assistance are likely to face serious financial difficulties, have difficulty staying employed, go on welfare, and/or have serious concerns about the quality of their children's care.[13]

Child care assistance makes a difference to families lucky enough to receive help

"As a single parent, child care is very important to my family. Quality child care at affordable prices is not always available. Thanks to the availability of child care funding, I am able to leave my children with a provider that I trust and am confident is providing quality care to my children. It also ensures that my asthmatic son will receive the special care that he requires on a daily basis. Quality child care makes it possible."

A mother from Muncie, Indiana, earning $16,000 per year[14]

- Indiana does not invest enough in helping families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 19 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Indiana spent 180 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[15] Since 1994, the state has increased its funding for child care and early education, but further investments are needed for the state to fulfill its commitment to improving the availability and quality of child care.

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Indiana are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Indiana affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[16] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[17] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[18]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Indiana.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Indiana's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Indiana—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Indiana's children from harm.

- Indiana is one of many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, the state allowed a single caregiver in a child care center to care for as many as 12 four-year-olds alone, although early childhood experts recommend no more than eight to ten.[19] This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.

- Indiana allows individuals caring for as many as five unrelated children in their homes to operate without having to meet any licensing health and safety protections. This means that a provider with a history of child abuse could legally care for up to five children in his/her home, and that a such a program could legally operate with safety hazards such as uncovered electrical outlets or poisonous substances that are not locked away.[20]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[21] Indiana is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[22] Indiana is also one of 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior training.[23]

22

- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[24] The Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral estimated in 1997 that child care providers (including child care center staff and family child care providers) earned $11,360 to $11,500 per year in northern and northwestern Indiana, $12,000 per year in central Indiana, and $10,300 to $10,600 per year in southern Indiana.[25] In addition, national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[26]

- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates among child care providers are high throughout Indiana. For instance, in central Indiana, the staff turnover rate is 18 percent in child care homes and 21 percent in centers. The turnover rates in southern Indiana (where the wages are lowest) are even higher, with a rate of 30 percent for family child care homes and a rate of 50 percent for staff in centers.[27] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[28]

Provider wages and benefits affect the quality of child care

An Indiana family shares: "My husband and I pay a high rate for toddler care. This is insignificant to us since (our son) is in a wonderful facility and is extremely happy there. Our 18-month-old had been going to another family child care home that did not work out. We searched for another home and found one that was solely for infants and toddlers. Our caregiver ensures that the children are cared for by capable, caring staff. She pays a higher wage to her full-time worker than the center in Indianapolis where I worked as a degreed lead teacher. In addition, she provides partial health benefits for that worker. This is almost unheard of in family child care."[29]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Indiana.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs, yet such programs are scarce in Indiana. As of February 1998, only 63 of Indiana's 657 licensed child care centers (or 10 percent) were accredited. Families in some areas have no access to accredited care; for example, none of the eight licensed centers in rural Warrick County are accredited.[30]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Indiana face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Indiana school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Indiana families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 161,687 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Indiana live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[31]
- Indiana children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[32] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[33] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[34] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Indiana, less than two out of five public schools (1,869 or 37 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[35]

Getting help paying for school-age care
can make all the difference for hard-working families

Jackie, a mother from Muncie earning $25,000 per year, writes: "Being a single working parent, dependable, affordable, and safe child care is a top priority of mine. I thought the financial pressures would ease a bit when both of my children went to school. Hearing the school system provided latchkey [care] seemed a dream come true. That is until I found at $3.50 per day per child ($7.00 per day when there is no school) latchkey [care] was not affordable or dependable for my family, which are two of many reasons why Huffer Memorial Children's Center is a godsend to me. I am thankful everyday my children can go there. I don't know what I would do without Huffer and United Way [which provides financial assistance). Not only can I go to work knowing my children are safe, happy, and well taken care of, Huffer staff really care about my children and love them."[36] Jackie receives a subsidy to help her defray some of her child care costs.

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Indiana.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[37] This means as many as 36,400 babies in Indiana are in child care if national patterns hold true.[38]

- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Indiana's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.

- Care for infants is more costly than *for older children—which makes it* even more difficult for families in Indiana to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. The average cost of child care for a 12-month-old ranged from $3,900 in northern Indiana to $8,580 in some regions of central Indiana.[39]

- Child care for infants can be hard to find in Indiana. For example, parents with infants living in Franklin have few child care options within the city. The city has three licensed child care centers and four in-home child care programs, and only one—Johnson Memorial Hospital—accepts infants.[40]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Indiana

Number of children younger than one[41]	80,990
Number of children younger than six[42]	493,199
Number of children ages six to 17[43]	1,005,325
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[44]	36,400
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[45]	295,900
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[46]	64%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[47]	77%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Indiana

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[48]	497,490
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Indiana[49]	$3,200

Average Annual Child Care Costs in Indiana (1997)[50]

Age of Child	North/Northwest Indiana	Central Indiana	Southern Indiana
12 months	$3,900 - $4,680	$3,952 - $8,580	$6,500
4 years	$3,380 - $3,900	$3,848 - $6,084	$3,224
8 years[51]	$3,628 - $4,107	$3,422 - $4,860	$2,909

Many Children in Indiana Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Indiana require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[52]	No
Does Indiana require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[53]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in Indiana in 1997[54]	
North/Northwest Indiana	$11,360 - $11,500
Central Indiana	$12,000
Southern Indiana	$10,300 - $10,600
Annual turnover rate for child care providers[55]	
North/Northwest Indiana	10% in homes, 20%-35% in centers
Central Indiana	18% in homes, 21% in centers
Southern Indiana	30% in homes, 50% in centers
Percentage of child care centers in Indiana that were accredited as of 1997[56]	10%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Indiana[57]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[58]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4*	3-4	Yes
18 months	5	3-5	Yes
27 months	5	4-6	Yes
3 years	10	7-10	Yes
4 years	12	8-10	No

*a single caregiver may care for up to five 9-month-old children if the children are walking.

Other Child Care Indicators in Indiana

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[59]	657
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[60]	2,821
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[61]	37%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral, Indianapolis, IN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, March 1998.

[9] Information from Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral, Indianapolis, IN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, March 1998.

[10] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[11] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[12] Information from the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration, April 29, 1998.

[13] Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, *Valuing Families: The High Cost of Waiting for Child Care Sliding Fee Assistance* (Minneapolis, MN: 1995).

[14] National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Book of Families, (Washington, DC, February 1998). Information collected by the local Children Care Resources and Referral Agency.

[15] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[16] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[17] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[18] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[19] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[20] Information from Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral, Indianapolis, IN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, March 1998.

[21] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools. (October 16, 1997).

[22] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[23] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[24] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[25] Indiana Child Care Resource and Referral (IACCRR), *Indiana Statistics Fact Sheet* (Indianapolis, IN: IACCRR, December 1997).

[26] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[27] Indiana Child Care Resource and Referral (IACCRR), *Indiana Statistics Fact Sheet* (Indianapolis, IN: IACCRR, December 1997).

[28] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[29] 4C, Wabash Valley, IN, *Book of Families* (Washington, DC: National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998).

[30] Information from Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral, Indianapolis, IN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, March 1998.

[31] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[32] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[33] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[34] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[35] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[36] National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, *Book of Families*, (Washington, DC: February 1998). Information collected by the local Child Care Resources and Referral Agency.

[37] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[38] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[39] Information from Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral, Indianapolis, IN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, March 1998.

[40] McNeil, Michelle, "Franklin schools study possibility of child care," *The Indianapolis News*, April 15, 1998.

[41] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[42] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[43] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[44] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[45] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[46] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[47] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[48] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[49] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[50] Information from Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral, Indianapolis, IN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, March 1998.

[51] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[52] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[53] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[54] Indiana Child Care Resource and Referral (IACCRR), *Indiana Statistics Fact Sheet* (Indianapolis, IN: IACCRR, December 1997).

[55] Indiana Child Care Resource and Referral (IACCRR), *Indiana Statistics Fact Sheet* (Indianapolis, IN: IACCRR, December 1997).

[56] Information from Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral, Indianapolis, IN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, March 1998.

[57] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts and from the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration.

[58] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[59] Data from Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral, Indianapolis, IN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, March 1998.

[60] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[61] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

IOWA:

CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Iowa parents.

- Every day, about 131,900 children younger than six are in child care in Iowa if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Iowa work to help support their families. An estimated 70 percent of Iowa mothers with children younger than six, and 82 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Iowa and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Iowa.

Child care is costly for many families in Iowa.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Iowa in 1997 was $2,655[6]— about three-fifths the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center.
- Many families in Iowa earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Iowa with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 215,280 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty or about $27,000 for a family of three).[7]
- In Iowa, child care for a four-year-old in a child care center cost $4,458 on average in 1997, with fees as high as $5,720. Care provided in family child care homes was expensive as well. The statewide average cost for family child care for a four-year-old was $3,964, with fees as high as $7,020.[8] These expenses are for only one child—parents with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Iowa[9]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Fort Madison	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$5,211	$7,280	$3,380	$3,640
4 years	$4,458	$5,720	$2,990	$3,120
8 years[10]	$2,432	$5,990	$1,797	$1,797

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Davenport		Oskaloosa	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,108	$8,190	$3,960	$7,020	$4,174	$5,265
4 years	$3,964	$7,020	$3,864	$7,020	$3,925	$5,265
8 years	$2,288	$4,493	$2,456	$4,193	$2,013	$2,696

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in Iowa, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *45 percent* of their income for child care.

> *Julie, a 28-year-old married woman in Ottumwa, IA, writes about her concerns about being able to afford child care: "My husband and I want to start a family, but child care costs are cost prohibitive in today's society."[11]*

Many low-income working families in Iowa are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Iowa ranks second from the bottom in making low-income families eligible for child care assistance. As of January 1998, 48 states, including all of Iowa's neighbors, allowed families with higher incomes to receive state subsidies. Only those working families with incomes below $16,670* (for a family of three) are eligible for any child care help in Iowa, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $33,780.[12] *[The only exceptions to Iowa's cutoff are for special needs families and families whose transitional year of child care is ending—in these cases, eligibility is extended to $20,662 per year, a cutoff which is still lower than the cutoff in two-thirds of the states.]

- As low as Iowa's current income cutoff is, it actually is an improvement over previous policies. Prior to this year, the state disqualified families making as little as $14,700 from receiving child care assistance. Families now eligible under the new cutoff, however, may not have access to help for much longer. Since the eligibility cutoff was increased, the caseload has been growing at about 300 to 340 children a month, yet the agency has not requested more state money to serve these additional children.[13] The state expects that eligible families applying for child care assistance will have to be placed on waiting lists by the end of 1999 if additional funds are not made available.[14]

- Parents in Iowa who may be eligible for child care subsidies do not apply because they do not know they can get help, according to the Iowa Child Care and Early Education NetWork[15] and a recent national survey. The state reports that of about 90,000 children eligible for assistance in the state, only about 11,000 children have families who have applied for assistance. If all these families did know they could get help, the state does not believe it would be able to serve them all.[16]

- The situation is likely to get worse in coming years, as more families are required to move from welfare to work. In a recent survey, Iowa reported that, without additional funds, it is not confident that it will be able to meet the demand for child care assistance generated by the increase in welfare work requirements.[17] Low-income working families who are *not* on welfare may end up losing assistance as more families on welfare need help.
- Iowa families fortunate enough to receive assistance often face limited options due to inadequate state polices. The state will not reimburse providers their full weekly fees if a child only needs care on a part-time basis, even if the provider must still reserve a full-time slot for the child. As a result, centers in Council Bluffs and other communities, concerned about covering their expenses, will not serve parents who receive child care subsidies and need part-time child care.[18] This situation creates problems for many families receiving assistance, since a significant proportion of these families are only able to find part-time work.
- Iowa does not invest enough in helping families pay for the good care that children need. Iowa spent only 37 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Iowa spent 83 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[19]

Some families needing assistance fall between the cracks

In Iowa, a father had open heart surgery, and the mother had just secured a full-time data entry job in a small company. Benefits were limited and not available during her probation period. She could not get a child care subsidy, because although the family income was low enough to meet the subsidy income guidelines, state required both parents to be working thirty hours a week or involved in a training or educational program. There was no exception for this family.[20]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Iowa are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Iowa affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[21] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[22] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[23]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Iowa.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Iowa's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Iowa—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Iowa's children from harm.

- Iowa is one of many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, the state allowed a single caregiver in a center classroom to care for as many as 12 four-year-old children alone—although early childhood experts recommend no more than eight to 10. This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.[24]

- Iowa allows individuals caring for up to six children in their homes to operate without having to meet any licensing health and safety protections.[25] The Community Child Care Resource and Referral in Davenport reports that, as a result, providers with substantiated cases of child abuse against them have been able to legally care for children in Iowa.[26] The state's licensing policies also mean that a program caring for as many as six children could legally operate with safety hazards such as uncovered electrical outlets or poisonous substances that are not locked away.

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[27] Iowa is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[28] It is also one of 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior training.[29]

- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[30] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Iowa was only $11,620 (only slightly above minimum wage).[31] National studies of child care providers find that they also tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[32]

- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in Iowa. The turnover rate for family child care providers in Iowa averages about 27 percent, but is as high as 31 percent in Waterloo and 54 percent in Bremer County.[33] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[34]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Iowa.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in Iowa. In 1997, only about 146 of Iowa's 1,559 licensed child care centers (or 9 percent) were accredited.[35] Families in some communities have particularly difficulty finding accredited care. Only one of the 36 licensed operating child care centers in Waterloo that were listed with the local resource and referral (CCR&R) agency was accredited, and none of three centers listed with the CCR&R in Bremer County were accredited.[36] There is only one accredited child care center in Davenport, and no accredited centers in Fort Madison.[37]

Child care centers lack the resources needed to keep their doors open

The experiences of centers in southwestern Iowa demonstrate the challenges many providers face in expanding their facilities, maintaining stability among staff, or just staying in business. Many child care centers (particularly for-profit centers) often cannot afford to build new facilities or expand existing ones. Other centers in the southwestern part of the state not only cannot grow, but also have difficulty keeping staff because they cannot pay more than minimum wage. A center in one town struggles to keep a director. Such high staff turnover affects the quality of care and the community's perception of the center. In addition, with significant overhead costs and parents wages' that are too low to support the cost of care, some centers are forced to close or change ownership. A center in one small town in southwestern Iowa has had four owners in the past five years.[38]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Iowa face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Iowa school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Iowa families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 70,065 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Iowa live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[39]
- Iowa children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[40] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[41] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[42] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Iowa, only about one in ten public schools (1,518 or 11 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[43]

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Iowa.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[44] This means as many as 16,200 babies in Iowa are in child care if national patterns hold true.[45]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Iowa's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping babies grow, Iowa was one of only 13 states that, in 1997, met levels recommended by early childhood experts for the number of babies and toddlers a single caregiver should be allowed to care for.[46]
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Iowa to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Iowa in 1997 averaged $5,211, but could cost as much as $7,280.[47]
- In Iowa, infant care is in short supply, according to information gathered by the Iowa Child Care and Early Education NetWork on parent requests for care and availability of care. Infant care is difficult to find throughout the state, but it is a particular problem in rural areas. For example, in Bremer County there is only one center that offers infant care.[48]

Other families in Iowa face shortages of care as well—such as families where the parents work nontraditional hours.

- Parents working hours other than the usual "9-to-5" may have problems trying to find someone to care for their children. Data from Iowa child care resource and referral agencies show that in four out of five regions in the state, fewer than one out of six providers offer care after 6 p.m. or overnight.[49]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Iowa

Number of children younger than one[50]	35,907
Number of children younger than six[51]	219,795
Number of children ages six to 17[52]	499,544
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[53]	16,200
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[54]	131,900
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[55]	70%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[56]	82%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Iowa

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty) [57]	215,280
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Iowa[58]	$2,655

Annual Child Care Costs in Iowa[59]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Fort Madison	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$5,211	$7,280	$3,380	$3,640
4 years	$4,458	$5,720	$2,990	$3,120
8 years[60]	$2,432	$5,990	$1,797	$1,797

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Davenport		Oskaloosa	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,108	$8,190	$3,960	$7,020	$4,174	$5,265
4 years	$3,964	$7,020	$3,864	$7,020	$3,925	$5,265
8 years	$2,288	$4,493	$2,456	$4,193	$2,013	$2,696

Many Children in Iowa Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Iowa require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children? [61]	No
Does Iowa require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children? [62]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in Iowa in 1996[63]	$11,620
Annual turnover rate for family child care providers in Iowa[64]	27%
Percentage of child care centers in Iowa that were accredited as of 1997[65]	9%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Iowa[66]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[67]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	4	3-5	Yes
27 months	6	4-6	Yes
3 years	8	7-10	Yes
4 years	12	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in Iowa

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[68]	1,559
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[69]	1,817
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[70]	3,270
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[71]	11%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from Community Child Care Resource and Referral, Davenport, IA and Iowa Child Care and Early Education NetWork, Des Moines, IA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997 and January 1998.

[9] Information from Community Child Care Resource and Referral, Davenport, IA and Iowa Child Care and Early Education NetWork, Des Moines, IA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997 and January 1998.

[10] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[11] From Lifetime Television's online project "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment" which collects stories about child care from families around the country. It is found at www.lifetimetv.com.

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] Salemy, "Advocates: Child care is link to independence for those on welfare," Des Moines: IA, *The Des Moines Register*, January 10, 1998, p. 4.

[14] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[15] Information from the Iowa Child Care and Early Education NetWork, Des Moines, IA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[16] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[17] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[18] Information from the Iowa Child Care and Early Education NetWork, Des Moines, IA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[19] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[20] Information from the Iowa Child Care and Early Education NetWork, Des Moines, Iowa; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[21] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[22] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[23] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[24] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[25] Information from the Iowa Child Care and Early Education NetWork, Des Moines, IA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies; January 1998.

[26] Information from the Community Child Care Resource and Referral, Davenport, IA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[27] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools (October 16, 1997).

[28] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[29] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[30] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[31] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[32] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[33] Information from the Iowa Child Care and Early Education NetWork, Des Moines, IA, collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[34] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[35] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[36] Information from the Iowa Child Care and Early Education NetWork, Des Moines, IA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[37] Information from the Community Child Care Resource and Referral, Davenport, IA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[38] Information from the Iowa Child Care and Early Education NetWork, Des Moines, IA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[39] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[40] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[41] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[42] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[43] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[44] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[45] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[46] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[47] Information from Community Child Care Resource and Referral, Davenport, IA and Iowa Child Care and Early Education NetWork, Des Moines, IA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997 and January 1998.

[48] Information from the Iowa Child Care and Early Education NetWork, Des Moines, IA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[49] Salemy, "Day care—at night: Need on rise in Iowa," Des Moines, IA: *Des Moines Register*, November 16, 1997, p. 1B.

[50] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[51] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[52] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[53] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[54] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[55] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[56] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[57] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995*. Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[58] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[59] Information from Community Child Care Resource and Referral, Davenport, IA and Iowa Child Care and Early Education NetWork, Des Moines, IA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997 and January 1998.

[60] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180

days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[61] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[62] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[63] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[64] Information from the Iowa Child Care and Early Education NetWork, Des Moines, IA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[65] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[66] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[67] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[68] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[69] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[70] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[71] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

KANSAS:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Kansas parents.

- Every day, about 130,300 children younger than six are in child care in Kansas if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Kansas work to help support their families. An estimated 65 percent of Kansas mothers with children younger than six, and 79 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Kansas and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Kansas.

Child care is costly for many families in Kansas.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Kansas in 1997 was $2,223[6]—three-fifths the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Johnson County.
- Many families in Kansas earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Kansas with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 224,940 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty or about $27,000 for a family of three).[7]
- In Kansas, child care for an infant or preschooler can easily cost an average of $3,000 to $7,000 per year, and is expensive for families whether they use a child care center or a family child care home. The average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Johnson County in 1997 was $5,200, with fees as high as $6,916; the average cost for a four-year-old in a family child care home in the same area was $4,940.[8] These expenses are for only one child—parents with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Kansas[9]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Johnson County		Chanute, Neosho County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$6,760	$7,436	n.a.	n.a.
4 years	$5,200	$6,916	$3,120	n.a.
8 years[10]	$3,423	$5,477	$2,791	n.a.

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Johnson County		Fort Scott, Bourbon County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$5,200	$9,360	$2,860	$3,120
4 years	$4,940	$7,800	$2,600	$2,860
8 years	$2,738	$5,134	$1,641	$1,797

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year old in a child care center at the average price in Johnson County, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *56 percent* of their income for child care.

Quality care that is affordable is difficult for parents to find

For Michael and Michelle of Berryton, child care for their four-year-old son Austin and their five-month-old daughter Natalie is a constant—and unavoidable—concern, as Michael writes: "Child care for us is stressful. My wife and I have high expectations for who cares for our kids. We are always checking on how things are going, and what we can do to make things go smoother. Child care costs a lot. Both of us have to work to keep the bills paid...." Michael and Michelle spend 22 percent of their annual income to pay for the care they want for their children.[11]

Many low-income working families in Kansas are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Kansas only allows low-income working families with incomes below $24,660 (for a family of three) to be eligible for any help in paying for child care, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $33,280.[12] This means that many hard-working low-income families who are not on welfare are not even eligible for help.
- There is going to be increased demand for child care assistance in coming years, as more families are required to move from welfare to work. In a recent survey, Kansas reported that, without additional funds, it is not confident that it will be able to meet the demand for child care assistance generated by the increase in welfare work requirements.[13] Low-income working families who are *not* on welfare may end up losing assistance as more families on welfare need help.

Even those Kansas families receiving child care assistance still face financial hardships and limited options due to inadequate state policies.

- Families receiving child care assistance in Kansas continue to shoulder a significant financial burden, as the state has some of the higher family copayment levels in the country. As of January 1998, a family of three earning only $19,995 a year (or only $1,670 a month) receiving child care help in Kansas could still be required to pay as much as 11 percent of their income (before taxes)—or $181 a month—in family copayments. This amount is higher than recommended by experts, and is significantly more than families at the same income level would have to pay in most other states, including neighboring states such as Nebraska.[14]
- Families in Kansas who receive child care assistance have difficulty finding providers who will take care of their children, as the amount the state will pay for care is below market prices. As of January 1998, the amount that Kansas would pay for child care was based on the cost of care in *1995*. As a consequence, providers charging at current market prices either have to ask parents to make up the difference (in addition to the already high parent fees required by the state), or refuse to take care of children with subsidies. In contrast, a number of other states paid at levels that were more reflective of current market prices.[15]

Even for families receiving assistance, quality child care is still expensive

Jimmy and Kelli C., of Chanute have three children—Christopher, age 10, Anthony, age five, and Joshua, age four. They have been pleased with their child care, writing, "Our experience with child care has been a good one! Our children are learning so much every day, and they enjoy going to the center, they have lots of friends, and they love their teachers, it makes us feels a lot better (when we're at work), knowing our children are being taken care of by professionals." To afford such quality care though, Jimmy and Kelli must spend a large portion of their budget on child care. The parents' combined earnings total just $31,000 per year—even though they receive some help paying for care, their out-of-pocket expenses for child care equal $315 per month, which is 15 percent of their net income.[16]

- Kansas does not invest enough in helping families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 43 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Kansas spent 59 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[17]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Kansas are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Kansas affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[18] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[19] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[20]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Kansas.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Kansas' children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Kansas—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Kansas' children from harm.
- Kansas is one of many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, Kansas met recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for only three of the six age groups examined. For example, the state allows a single caregiver in a child care center to care for as many as 12 three- or four-year-olds alone, although early childhood experts recommend no more than seven to 10.[21] This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.
- Periodic inspections by licensing staff are one of the most important ways to ensure the safety and well-being of children in licensed child care programs, as the inspections allow licensers to detect unsafe situations such as safety risks, unsanitary practices, and too many children per adult. Annual inspections by licensing staff in Kansas found that 75 percent of providers had some type of violation.[22]
- The protections designed to keep Kansas children safe and healthy while they are in care are often not adequately enforced, according to a performance audit of Kansas' Department of Health and Environment completed in November 1997. The report indicates that:
    - ⇒ Many of the child care regulatory activities in Kansas are not being adequately carried out by local health departments and private contractors;
    - ⇒ at the state level, backlogs of information are causing significant delays in getting criminal background checks for staff in larger child care facilities; and
    - ⇒ when the Department identifies regulatory violations, it does not take adequate steps to ensure that the problems are corrected and children are sufficiently protected.[23]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. While hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[24] Kansas is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[25]

- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[26] In Kansas in 1997, the average yearly salary of child care teachers ranged from $12,920 to $15,860,[27] and salaries of child care assistants ranged from $11,240 to $12,380.[28] National studies find that child care providers also tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[29]

- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers; nationwide, about one-third of child care teachers leave their centers each year.[30] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[31]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Kansas.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in Kansas. In 1997, only 47 of Kansas' 644 licensed child care centers (or 7 percent) were accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).[32] Only five family child care providers were accredited by National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC).[33]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Kansas face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Kansas school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Kansas families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 73,694 school-age children (ages 5 to 17) in Kansas live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[34]

- Kansas children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[35] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[36] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[37] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.

- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Kansas, only about one out of five public schools (1,450 or 18 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[38]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Kansas.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Kansas.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[39] This means that as many as 16,300 babies in Kansas are in child care if national patterns hold true.[40]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Kansas' young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, while a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping very young children grow, Kansas allowed a single caregiver in a center to take care of seven two-year-olds. In contrast, early childhood experts recommend no more than four to six toddlers this age per adult.[41] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, play, read to, and care for seven two-year-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency.
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Kansas to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. For example, in 1997, child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Johnson County averaged $6,760 a year, but could cost as much as $7,436.[42]
- The Kansas Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (KACCRRA), which helps families find child care, reports that there is a shortage of providers willing to care for infants and toddlers throughout the state.[43]

Other families in Kansas face shortages of care as well—such as families trying to move from welfare to work.

- In certain areas of Kansas, there may not be enough child care available to meet the needs of parents moving from welfare to work. KACCRRA is particularly concerned that although many of these parents will have to take jobs requiring nonstandard hours, only a limited number of providers offer care during these hours.[44]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Kansas

Number of children younger than one[45]	36,113
Number of children younger than six[46]	217,178
Number of children ages six to 17[47]	470,136
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[48]	16,300
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[49]	130,300
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[50]	65%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[51]	79%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Kansas

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty) [52]	224,940
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Kansas[53]	$2,223

Annual Child Care Costs in Kansas[54]

Child Care Centers (1997)

Age of Child	Johnson County		Chanute, Neosho County	
	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$6,760	$7,436	n.a.	n.a.
4 years	$5,200	$6,916	$3,120	n.a.
8 years[55]	$3,423	$5,477	$2,791	n.a.

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

Age of Child	Johnson County		Fort Scott, Bourbon County	
	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$5,200	$9,360	$2,860	$3,120
4 years	$4,940	$7,800	$2,600	$2,860
8 years	$2,738	$5,134	$1,641	$1,797

Many Children in Kansas Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Kansas require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children? [56]		Yes
Does Kansas require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children? [57]		No
Average salary for a child care worker in Kansas in 1997:[58]	child care teachers	$12,920 - $15,860
	child care assistants	$11,240 - $12,380
Percentage of child care centers in Kansas that were accredited as of 1997[59]		7%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Kansas[60]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[61]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	3	3-4	Yes
18 months	5	3-5	Yes
27 months	7	4-6	No
3 years	12	7-10	No
4 years	12	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in Kansas

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[62]	644
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[63]	620
Number of licensed and registered family child care homes in 1997[64]	7,922
Number of licensed preschool programs in 1997[65]	333
Number of licensed school-age programs in 1997[66]	328
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[67]	18%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from Kansas Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Salina, KS; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[9] Information from Kansas Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Salina, KS; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[10] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[11] National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, *Book of Families*, (Washington, DC: February 1998). Information collected by the local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency in Berryton, KS.

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[15] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[16] National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, *Book of Families*, (Washington, DC: February 1998). Information collected by Noah's Ark Child Care Resource and Referral in Chanute, KS.

[17] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[18] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[19] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[20] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[21] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[22] Information from Kansas Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Salina, KS; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[23] Information from Kansas Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Salina, KS; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[24] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools (October 16, 1997).

[25] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[26] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[27] *The Status of Child Care in Metropolitan Kansas City*, Metropolitan Council on Child Care, Kansas City, MO, as reported in *Current Data on Child Care Salaries and Benefits in the United States*, Center for the Child Care Workforce (Washington, DC: Center for the Child Care Workforce, March 1998).

[28] *The Status of Child Care in Metropolitan Kansas City*, Metropolitan Council on Child Care, Kansas City, MO, as reported in *Current Data on Child Care Salaries and Benefits in the United States*, Center for the Child Care Workforce (Washington, DC: Center for the Child Care Workforce, March 1998).

[29] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report* (1995) (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[30] National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW).

[31] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[32] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[33] Information from Kansas Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Salina, KS; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[34] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[35] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[36] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[37] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[38] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[39] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[40] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[41] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[42] Information from Kansas Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Salina, KS; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[43] Information from Kansas Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Salina, KS; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[44] Information from Kansas Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Salina, KS; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[45] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[46] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[47] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[48] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[49] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[50] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[51] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[52] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[53] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[54] Information from Kansas Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Salina, KS, collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[55] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[56] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing.* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[57] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing.* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[58] *The Status of Child Care in Metropolitan Kansas City*, Metropolitan Council on Child Care, Kansas City, MO, as reported in *Current Data on Child Care Salaries and Benefits in the United States*, Center for the Child Care Workforce.

[59] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study — on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm, and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

[60] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[61] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[62] Data from Kansas Department of Health and Environment, October 1997.

[63] Data from Kansas Department of Health and Environment, October 1997.

[64] Data from Kansas Department of Health and Environment, October 1997.

[65] Data from Kansas Department of Health and Environment, October 1997.

[66] Data from Kansas Department of Health and Environment, October 1997.

[67] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

MICHIGAN:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Michigan parents.

- Every day, about 489,900 children younger than six are in child care in Michigan if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Michigan work to help support their families. An estimated 57 percent of Michigan mothers with children younger than six, and 73 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Michigan and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Michigan.

Child care is costly for many families in Michigan.

- Child care costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Michigan in 1997 was $3,986[6]—four-fifths as much as the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center, and less than two-thirds the average cost for an infant.
- Many families in Michigan earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Michigan with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 754,170 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[7]
- In Michigan, child care for a four-year-old in a child care center cost an average of $4,970 in 1997, with fees as high as $6,482. Child care is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. The average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Wayne County/ Detroit was $4,715 and the average annual cost in Muskegon County was $4,505.[8] These expenses are for only one child. Parents with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Michigan[9]

Child Care Centers (1997)

Age of child	Statewide Average	Statewide High	Wayne County/ Detroit Average	Wayne County/ Detroit High	Muskegon County Average	Muskegon County High
12 months	$6,287	$8,200	$6,056	n.a.	$4,786	n.a.
4 years	$4,970	$6,482	$4,715	n.a.	$4,505	n.a.
8 years[10]	$2,887	$2,923	$2,348	n.a.	$2,648	n.a.

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

Age of child	Statewide Average	Statewide High	Wayne County/ Detroit Average	Wayne County/ Detroit High	Muskegon County Average	Muskegon County High
12 months	$4,799	$7,020	$5,198	n.a.	$4,555	n.a.
4 years	$4,789	$6,136	$4,628	n.a.	$4,482	n.a.
8 years	$2,384	$2,923	$2,144	n.a.	$2,312	n.a.

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in Michigan, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *53 percent* of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in Michigan are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Michigan allows only low-income working families with incomes below $26,064 (for a family of three) to be eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $37,810.[11] Michigan's income cutoff is lower than that in a number of states, including Minnesota, where families earning $34,000 can qualify for assistance.
- Even with Michigan's low income cutoff, the state reports that it is not confident that it could serve all eligible families if it was to do active outreach to inform them that they could get help paying for child care.[12]
- It is estimated that about 163,000 children are eligible for child care assistance in Michigan, yet only 60,000 of these children are receiving assistance. To serve just half of the eligible children who are not currently receiving assistance, the state would need to increase its investment in child care by $147 million.[13]
- The increase in welfare work requirements is already generating increased demand for child care assistance in communities throughout Michigan. For example, in Genesee County, the demand for child care for welfare recipients doubled between June 1997, when the state's Family Independence Agency had 579 new cases, and September 1997, when there were 1,165.[14] Unfortunately, the state recently reported that it is unsure whether, without additional funds, it will be able to continue to meet this growing need for child care assistance, particularly as the higher work requirements come into effect in coming years.[15]

Even those Michigan families fortunate enough to receive child care assistance often face limited options due to inadequate state policies.

- In some cases, providers serving children whose care they believe will be subsidized not only receive late payments, but no payment at all. Often, providers accept children on a promise only to find out that authorization was not awarded. Many providers have been burned in this way, reports the Michigan 4C Association, which helps families find care.[16] Some Michigan child care providers, unable to sustain the financial pressures created by delays and denials of checks, have started refusing to accept children eligible for assistance.[17] This situation creates serious problems for low-income families trying to find care for their children, as well as for the child care providers trying to serve them.

State payment policies make it difficult for providers to serve children receiving subsidies

Theresa Roberge runs the Happy Pelican Day Care from her home in Flint. Of the four low-income children in her care, the state has denied payments for two of them, she said, because the parents made some mistakes in filling out the paperwork (including details of when and where they worked). Roberge was not allowed to fill out the paperwork herself and was told by the Family Independence Agency (FIA) that she was out almost $1,300. She was told that she must sue the parents herself if she wants the money.[18]

* * * * * * *

Renee Verbeke, who runs Playhouse Day Care in Davison, says her problem with the state was not paperwork tangles, it was repeated delays. Of the 15 state checks she has gotten since February, 13 have been delayed or wrong. She became angry after a state worker told her to be patient about another delay in $2,300 check.[19]

- Michigan does not invest enough in helping families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 37 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Michigan spent 68 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[20]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Michigan are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Michigan affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[21] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[22] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[23]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Michigan.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Michigan's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Michigan—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Michigan's children from harm.

- Michigan is one of the many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, for example, Michigan allowed a caregiver in a center to care for 12 four-year-olds alone, although early childhood experts recommend no more than eight to 10.[24] This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.

- Periodic inspections by licensing staff are one of the most important ways to ensure the safety and well-being of children in licensed child care programs, as the inspections allow licensers to detect unsafe situations such as safety risks, unsanitary practices, and too many children per adult to care for adequately. Yet the average caseload for child care licensing staff in Michigan is 290, a dramatic increase from 1985, when the caseload was 170. With such high caseloads, it is difficult for child care licensing staff to ensure that children are safe in child care.[25]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they can become licensed,[26] Michigan is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[27] Michigan is also one of 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior training.[28]

- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[29] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Michigan was only $14,080[30] and studies have found that even teachers at the high end of the salary scale earn only $20,600.[31] In addition, national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[32]

- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. In Michigan in 1997, turnover rates for teachers were 18 percent, and 22 percent for child care assistants.[33] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[34]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Michigan.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in Michigan. In 1997, only about 115 of Michigan's 4,465 licensed child care centers (or 3 percent) were accredited.[35]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Michigan face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Michigan school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Michigan families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 386,488 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Michigan live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[36]
- Michigan children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[37] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[38] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[39] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Michigan, only about one in five public schools (3,159 or 19 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[40]
- The Michigan 4C Association, which helps families find child care, reports that many Michigan families with school-age children have difficulties finding safe, quality care for their children.[41]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Michigan.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[42] This means as many as 58,700 babies in Michigan are in child care if national patterns hold true.[43]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Michigan's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping babies grow, many states allow a single caregiver to care for too many infants and

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

toddlers. In 1997, Michigan was one of only 13 states that met recommended levels for the number of babies and toddlers a single caregiver was allowed to care for.[44]

- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Michigan to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Michigan in 1997 averaged $6,287, but could cost as much as $8,200.[45]
- In a 1995 study by the U.S. General Accounting Office, Michigan officials reported that their state had a shortage of infant care in the inner cities and rural areas.[46] The shortage of infant care remained critically acute in 1997, according to the Michigan 4C Association.[47]

Other families in Michigan face shortages of care as well—such as families where the parents have nonstandard work schedules, families moving from welfare to work, families living in rural areas, and families whose children have special needs.

- In Michigan, there is a severe shortage of odd-hour care, creating difficulties for any parent whose work schedule is not the traditional "9-to-5" shift.[48] The lack of care during evenings and weekends is a particular problem for low-income families, many of whom work nonstandard schedules. For instance, in 1996, two out of five low-income families receiving child care assistance in Michigan worked nontraditional hours (hours other than 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.).[49]
- It is not clear whether spaces will be available for families moving from welfare to work—a suburban county child care specialist said the supply of child care providers could not handle the 3,000 new parents in the county who were required to participate in the state's welfare reform programs.[50]
- In a 1995 study by the U.S. General Accounting Office, Michigan officials reported a shortage of child care of all types in rural areas.[51]
- Agencies that help Michigan families find child care report that parents whose children have special needs have difficulty locating care for their children.[52]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Michigan

Number of children younger than one[53]	130,372
Number of children younger than six[54]	816,429
Number of children ages six to 17[55]	1,720,585

If national trends hold true, estimated number of:

children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[56]	58,700
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[57]	489,900

Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[58]	57%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[59]	73%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Michigan

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty) [60]	754,170
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Michigan[61]	$3,986

Annual Child Care Costs in Michigan[62]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Wayne County/Detroit		Muskegon County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$6,287	$8,200	$6,056	n.a.	$4,786	n.a.
4 years	$4,970	$6,482	$4,715	n.a.	$4,505	n.a.
8 years[63]	$2,887	$2,923	$2,348	n.a.	$2,648	n.a.

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Wayne County/Detroit		Muskegon County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,799	$7,020	$5,198	n.a.	$4,555	n.a.
4 years	$4,789	$6,136	$4,628	n.a.	$4,482	n.a.
8 years	$2,384	$2,923	$2,144	n.a.	$2,312	n.a.

Many Children in Michigan Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Michigan require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children? [64]		No
Does Michigan require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children? [65]		No
Average salary for a child care worker in Michigan in 1996[66]		$14,080
Annual turnover rates for child care workers in Michigan in 1997:[67]	child care teachers	18%
	child care assistants	22%
Percentage of child care centers in Michigan that were accredited as of 1997[68]		3%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Michigan[69]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[70]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	4	3-5	Yes
27 months	4	4-6	Yes
3 years	10	7-10	Yes
4 years	12	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in Michigan

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[71]	4,465
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[72]	3,431
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[73]	13,591
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[74]	19%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from Michigan 4C Association, East Lansing, MI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[9] Information from Michigan 4C Association, East Lansing, MI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[10] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[11] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] Michigan 4C Association, *The Economics of Child Care.* Presented to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Consumer and Industry Services, (East Lansing, MI: Michigan 4C Association, April 30, 1997).

[14] Upton and Putnam, "Late checks from state threaten child care," Flint, MI: *The Flint Journal*, November 3, 1997.

[15] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[16] Information from Michigan 4C Association, East Lansing, MI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[17] Upton and Putnam, "Late checks from state threaten child care," Flint, MI: *The Flint Journal*, November 3, 1997.

[18] Upton and Putnam, "Late checks from state threaten child care," Flint, MI: *The Flint Journal*, November 3, 1997, p. A-1.

[19] Upton and Putnam, "Late checks from state threaten child care," Flint, MI: *The Flint Journal*, November 3, 1997.

[20] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[21] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[22] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[23] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[24] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[25] Michigan 4C Association, *The Economics of Child Care.* Presented to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Consumer and Industry Services, (East Lansing, MI: Michigan 4C Association, April 30, 1997), Exhibit 3.

[26] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools. (October 16, 1997).

[27] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[28] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[29] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[30] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[31] Center for the Child Care Workforce, *A Decade of Change in Center-Based Child Care*, Washington, DC, as reported in Center for the Child Care Workforce, *Current Data on Child Care Salaries and Benefits in the United States* (Washington, DC: Center for the Child Care Workforce, March 1998).

[32] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[33] Center for the Child Care Workforce, *A Decade of Change in Center-Based Child Care*, Washington, DC, as reported in Center for the Child Care Workforce, *Current Data on Child Care Salaries and Benefits in the United States* (Washington, DC: Center for the Child Care Workforce, March 1998).

[34] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[35] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[36] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[37] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[38] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[39] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School." *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[40] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[41] Michigan 4C Association, *The Economics of Child Care.* Presented to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Consumer and Industry Services, (East Lansing, MI: Michigan 4C Association, April 30, 1997), Exhibit 2.

[42] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[43] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[44] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[45] Information from Michigan 4C Association, East Lansing, MI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[46] U.S. General Accounting Office. *Welfare to Work: Child Care Assistance Limited; Welfare Reform May Expand Needs* (Washington, DC: GAO, 1995).

[47] Michigan 4C Association, *The Economics of Child Care.* Presented to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Consumer and Industry Services, (East Lansing, MI: Michigan 4C Association, April 30, 1997), Exhibit 2.

[48] Michigan 4C Association, *The Economics of Child Care.* Presented to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Consumer and Industry Services, (East Lansing, MI: Michigan 4C Association, April 30, 1997), Exhibit 2.

[49] Michigan's Children, *Demographics of Child Day Care Caseload - December 1996* (Lansing, MI: Michigan's Children, December 1996).

[50] U.S. General Accounting Office. *Welfare to Work: Child Care Assistance Limited; Welfare Reform May Expand Needs* (Washington, DC: GAO, 1995).

[51] U.S. General Accounting Office. *Welfare to Work: Child Care Assistance Limited; Welfare Reform May Expand Needs* (Washington, DC: GAO, 1995).

[52] Michigan 4C Association, *The Economics of Child Care.* Presented to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Consumer and Industry Services, (East Lansing, MI: Michigan 4C Association, April 30, 1997), Exhibit 2.

[53] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[54] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[55] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[56] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[57] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[58] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[59] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[60] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[61] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[62] Information from Michigan 4C Association, East Lansing, MI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[63] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[64] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[65] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[66] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[67] Center for the Child Care Workforce, *A Decade of Change in Center-Based Child Care*, Washington, DC, as reported in Center for the Child Care Workforce, *Current Data on Child Care Salaries and Benefits in the United States* (Washington, DC: Center for the Child Care Workforce, March 1998).

[68] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[69] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[70] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[71] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[72] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[73] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[74] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

MINNESOTA:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Minnesota parents.

- Every day, about 230,100 children younger than six are in child care in Minnesota if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Minnesota work to help support their families. An estimated 69 percent of Minnesota mothers with children younger than six, and 82 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Minnesota and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Minnesota.

Child care is costly for many families in Minnesota.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Minnesota in 1997 was $3,539[6]—less than three-fifths the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center.
- Many families in Minnesota earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Minnesota with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 279,450 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[7]
- In Minnesota, child care for a four-year-old in a child care center cost an average of $6,072 in 1997. Child care is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas—the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Minneapolis was $6,662, with fees as high as $11,268; and the average cost in rural Clay County was $4,394, with fees as high as $4,680.[8] These expenses are for only one child—parents with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Minnesota[9]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Minneapolis		Clay County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$8,273	$14,872	$9,447	$14,560	$5,213	$5,746
4 years	$6,072	$14,456	$6,662	$11,268	$4,394	$4,680
8 years[10]	$4,672	$10,782	$5,667	$7,188	$2,396	$2,396

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Minneapolis		Clay County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,694	$10,140	$5,419	$9,880	$4,039	$5,720
4 years	$4,481	$9,750	$5,088	$9,750	$3,969	$5,720
8 years	$2,827	n.a.	$3,929	n.a.	$2,144	$2,995

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in Minnesota, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *67 percent* of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in Minnesota are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Minnesota allows only low-income working families with incomes below $34,274 (for a family of three) to be eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $38,839.[11]
- The state cannot serve all families who are eligible and apply for child care help. As of December 31, 1997, 3,080 Minnesota families were on waiting lists for child care assistance.[12] These waiting lists are likely to underestimate the number of eligible families needing assistance, as some families do not bother to sign up because they know the list is long and others may not know they are eligible. For example, the Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network reports that many families in rural areas of the state who are eligible for child care assistance may not be aware that they can receive help paying for child care.[13]
- Low-income families placed on waiting lists for child care assistance face a broad range of problems, as illustrated by a 1995 study of families in Hennepin County. Most families on the waiting list who were working and paying for child care experienced significant levels of debt or bankruptcy. One-fourth of all families interviewed had to go on welfare to survive. Some found it difficult to maintain employment because of unstable child care arrangements. One-third of the parents felt their children's child care settings threatened their safety and development, and many families were experiencing severe stress.[14]
- The situation is likely to get worse in coming years, as more families are required to move from welfare to work. In a recent survey, Minnesota reported that, without additional funds, it is not confident that it will be able to meet the demand for child care assistance generated by the increase in welfare work requirements.[15] Low-income working families who are *not* on welfare may end up losing assistance as more families on welfare need help.

Parents waiting for child care assistance experience serious economic difficulties

I pay $460 a month for child care. I am a single parent and a manager of a restaurant. As a result of day care expenses I try to cut back on hours at work...to reduce the day care amount. My unit then suffers...to the point I worry I may lose my job. I have lost out on bonus money I depend on and have fallen behind on several bills...I am currently looking into bankruptcy.

A parent on the waiting list for child care assistance in Hennepin County, MN[16]

- In addition to the children already on waiting lists, an estimated 12,600 more children from families leaving welfare will need care in Minnesota due to welfare reform. This represents a significant increase over current applicants to child care.[17]
- Even those parents in Minnesota fortunate enough to receive child care assistance may face limited options in choosing a child care provider due to inadequate state policies. Data from the statewide resource and referral network indicate that only three out of five licensed providers are willing to care for children who are receiving subsidies from the state. The paperwork providers must file and delays in receiving payment discourage many providers from serving children whose care is subsidized.[18]
- According to local experts, reimbursement problems and the resulting limited child care options are likely to affect families moving off welfare, as payment problems are common in the seven-county metro area where close to half of the families receiving public assistance in Minnesota live.[19]
- Minnesota does not invest enough in helping families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 61 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Minnesota spent 32 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[20] Since 1994, the state has increased its funding for child care, but the state's investment still falls short, with many low-income families unable to receive the child care assistance they need.

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Minnesota are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Minnesota affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[21] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[22] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[23]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Minnesota.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Minnesota's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Minnesota—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Minnesota's children from harm.
- Minnesota is one of many states that do not adequately protect their children. For example, in Minnesota, new family child care providers have a full year after becoming licensed to receive CPR and first aid training. In addition, family child care providers are not required to take ongoing refresher courses in CPR and first aid after initial certification.[24]
- Minnesota allows individuals caring for up to five children in their homes to operate without having to meet any licensing health and safety protections.[25] This means that a provider with a history of child abuse could legally care for as many as five children in his/her home, and that a program could legally operate with safety hazards such as uncovered electrical outlets or poisonous substances that are not locked away.

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[26] Minnesota is one of the relatively few states that require child care staff to have *any* early childhood training prior to starting work. Even so, family child care providers in Minnesota are allowed to care for children with only six hours of previous training.[27]
- In 1997, only about one in four (24 percent) child care providers in Minnesota had some child development credit courses, and an even smaller percentage (8 percent) had specific child care training (Child Development Associate or competency training.)[28]
- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100).[29] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Minnesota was only $15,760.[30] A 1995 statewide study found that even child care teachers at the high end of the salary scale only earned $17,980.[31] Furthermore, national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[32]
- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in Minnesota. One study found that annual turnover rates among Minnesota child care teachers was 28 percent,[33] and other data show that 52 percent of all providers will leave the child care business within three years.[34] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[35]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Minnesota.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in Minnesota, particularly outside the Minneapolis/St. Paul area. In 1997, only about 215 of Minnesota's 1,487 licensed child care centers and preschools (or 14 percent) were accredited.[36] There were 277 family child care providers having National Association of Family Child Care Competency-Based Training, or Child Development Associate accreditation. Overall, however, only 3 percent of all providers in all child care settings in the state had some form of accreditation.[37]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Minnesota face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

Many families in Minnesota have trouble finding good child care in their communities.

- Significant numbers of Minnesota families are having difficulties finding the care they need. The Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network conducted follow-up interviews with many of the 5,000 families that had received referrals, and found that 30 percent of the parents surveyed reported difficulty finding care because of lack of openings, 20 percent had difficulty finding care because of the child care was not available during the hours parents needed it, and 15 percent had difficulty finding care because the location was not appropriate.[38]
- In three regions of Minnesota, 50 percent or more of the parents receiving referrals from the child care resource and referral agency were unable to find care due to a lack of openings.[39]

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Minnesota school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Minnesota families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 118,182 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Minnesota live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[40]

School-age care is scarce

A mother of two school-age children (Ashley, age 12 and Jennifer, age 7) explains the difficulties trying to find care for her children in Coon Rapids, Minnesota: "I stopped providing licensed family child care in June 1997 when I was offered ...[a different job]. I knew that I would need child care in September, so I called the after-school program at my daughter's elementary school. Jenny was sixth on the waiting list at that time. Now eight months later she is still sixth on the waiting list. The problem is a lack of qualified staff willing to work for low wages. It is ironic that I left child care for a job with better pay, better hours and benefits, and now I can't find care for my youngest daughter. Jenny is currently being 'cared' for by her older sister after school."[41]

- Minnesota children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[42] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[43] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[44] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Minnesota, only about three in ten public schools (1,492 or 29 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[45]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Minnesota.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[46] This means as many as 27,900 babies in Minnesota are in child care if national patterns hold true.[47]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Minnesota's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. Although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping babies and toddlers grow, Minnesota allows a single center-based caregiver to care for *seven* 18-month-old toddlers. In contrast, early childhood experts recommend that a single caregiver be responsible for no more than three to five toddlers this age.[48] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, diaper, play, and care for seven active 18-month-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency.
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Minnesota to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Minnesota in 1997 *averaged* $8,273, but could cost as much as $14,872.[49]
- Parents' need for infant care in Minnesota outstrips supply in the state. As of December 1997, 34 percent of the child care requests made to Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral agencies were for infants, yet only 10 percent of the state's providers had infant openings available at the time care was requested.[50]

> *My child is six months old and has been in three horrible daycares in two-and-a-half months.*
>
> *A parent on the waiting list for child care assistance in Hennepin County, MN*[51]

Other families face shortages of care as well—such as families where the parents work nontraditional hours or where the children have special needs.

- Parents working hours other than the traditional "9-to-5" shift have particular difficulty finding care. Minnesota parents who contact their local resource and referral agency for assistance in locating care during evenings, weekends, and overnight hours often cannot be helped.[52] Of the licensed center and child care homes in Minnesota, only 11 percent offer evening care, only 9 percent offer overnight care, and just 6 percent provide weekend care.[53]

Parents with children who have special needs cannot find the care they need

Kevin, a Mankato father, works a 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. shift and has had a hard time locating suitable child care for his three-year-old son Anthony and his five-year-old son Damien who has special needs: "I've had trouble finding a child care provider to give Damien a chance. He needs more attention and is so full of energy. Providers need to show more interest in caring for a child with special needs, and be more aware of the child's needs, and attend trainings. I've been trying to find child care since April 1997."[54]

The gap between the need for child care and the supply of quality, affordable care will continue to grow as more Minnesota families move from welfare to work.

- A 1997 study mapping the current supply and projected demand for child care found that the new demand created by parents moving from welfare to work will create severe shortages in all six Minnesota counties studied (Anoka, Crow Wing, Hennepin, Olmsted, Ramsey, and St Louis).[55]

- In Minnesota in 1997, about 12,600 additional children were expected to need child care as their parents left welfare for work, requiring about 1,600 new providers. While local experts estimated that recruiting and training 1,600 providers would cost about $39 million, the state only provided about $1 million in funding.[56]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Minnesota

Number of children younger than one[57]	61,907
Number of children younger than six[58]	383,496
Number of children ages six to 17[59]	863,512
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[60]	27,900
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[61]	230,100
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[62]	69%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[63]	82%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Minnesota

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty) [64]	279,450
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Minnesota[65]	$3,539

Annual Child Care Costs in Minnesota[66]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Minneapolis		Clay County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$8,273	$14,872	$9,447	$14,560	$5,213	$5,746
4 years	$6,072	$14,456	$6,662	$11,268	$4,394	$4,680
8 years[67]	$4,672	$10,782	$5,667	$7,188	$2,396	$2,396

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Minneapolis		Clay County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,694	$10,140	$5,419	$9,880	$4,039	$5,720
4 years	$4,481	$9,750	$5,088	$9,750	$3,969	$5,720
8 years	$2,827	n.a.	$3,929	n.a.	$2,144	$2,995

Many Children in Minnesota Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Minnesota require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children? [68]	Yes
Does Minnesota require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children? [69]	Yes
Average salary for a child care worker in Minnesota in 1996[70]	$15,760
Turnover rate for all child care providers in Minnesota[71]	52% over 3 years
Percentage of child care centers in Minnesota that were accredited as of 1997[72]	14%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Minnesota[73]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[74]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	7	3-5	No
27 months	7	4-6	No
3 years	10	7-10	Yes
4 years	10	8-10	Yes

Other Child Care Indicators in Minnesota

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[75]	1,487
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[76]	15,559
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[77]	29%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Rochester, MN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[9] Information from Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Rochester, MN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[10] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[11] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] Information from Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Rochester, MN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[14] Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, *Valuing Families: The High Cost of Waiting for Child Care Sliding Fee Assistance* (Minneapolis, MN: Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, 1995).

[15] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[16] Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, *Valuing Families: The High Cost of Waiting for Child Care Sliding Fee Assistance* (Minneapolis, MN: Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, 1995).

[17] Child Care WORKS, "Child Care Capacity—A Developing Crisis," *In The Works,* (Minneapolis, MN: Child Care WORKS, June 1997), p. 3.

[18] Memo from Judith Jordan of the Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network, April 29, 1998.

[19] Information from Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Rochester, MN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[20] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[21] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[22] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[23] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[24] Information from the Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Rochester, MN, April 1998.

[25] However, no more than four children can be unrelated, and no more than two children can be under the age of two. Information from Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Rochester, MN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[26] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools (October 16, 1997).

[27] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[28] Information from Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Rochester, MN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[29] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[30] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[31] *The 1995 Early Childhood Workforce Study*, Alliance of Early Childhood Professionals, Minneapolis, MN, as reported in *Current Data on Child Care Salaries and Benefits in the United States*, (Washington, DC: Center for the Child Care Workforce, March 1998).

[32] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[33] *The 1995 Early Childhood Workforce Study*, Alliance of Early Childhood Professionals, Minneapolis, MN, as reported in *Current Data on Child Care Salaries and Benefits in the United States*, Center for the Child Care Workforce, (Washington, DC: Center for the Child Care Workforce, March 1998).

[34] Information from Minnesota's Carefinder (a statewide database of child care providers), provided by the Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Rochester, MN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[35] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[36] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[37] Memo from Judith Jordan of the Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network, April 29, 1998.

[38] Memo from Judith Jordan of the Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network, April 29, 1998.

[39] Information from Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Rochester, MN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[40] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[41] National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, *Book of Families*, (Washington, DC: National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998). Information collected by the Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network in Rochester, MN.

[42] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[43] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[44] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[45] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[46] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[47] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[48] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts. Family child care providers licensed for ten children allow no more than three infants and toddlers in care at one time with no more than two being under 16 months of age (according to the Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network).

[49] Information from Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Rochester, MN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[50] Information from Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Rochester, MN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[51] Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, *Valuing Families: The High Cost of Waiting for Child Care Sliding Fee Assistance* (Minneapolis, MN: Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, 1995).

[52] Information from Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Rochester, MN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[53] Information form the Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network, April 1998.

[54] National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, *Book of Families*, (Washington, DC: National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998). Information collected by the Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network in Rochester, MN.

[55] Child Care WORKS, "Child Care Capacity—A Developing Crisis," *In The Works*, (Minneapolis, MN: Child Care WORKS; June 1997), p. 3.

[56] Information from Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Rochester, MN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[57] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[58] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[59] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[60] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[61] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[62] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[63] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[64] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993,*

1994, and 1995. Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[65] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[66] Information from Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Rochester, MN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[67] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[68] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[69] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[70] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[71] Information from Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Rochester, MN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[72] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[73] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts. Family child care providers licensed for ten children allow no more than three infants and toddlers in care at one time with no more than two being under 16 months of age (according to the Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network).

[74] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[75] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[76] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[77] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

MISSOURI:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Missouri parents.

- Every day, about 266,900 children younger than six are in child care in Missouri if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.

- Most mothers in Missouri work to help support their families. An estimated 65 percent of Missouri mothers with children younger than six, and 77 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]

- For many mothers in Missouri and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

- The number of children needing child care will continue to grow as more women enter the workforce and as more families move from welfare to work. For instance, the United Way of St. Louis estimates that, in the next three years, about 19,000 more children (up to age six) in St. Louis will need care than in 1995.[6]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Missouri.

Child care is costly for many families in Missouri.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Missouri in 1997 was $3,230[7]—two-thirds the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in St. Louis, and four-fifths the cost in Franklin County.

- Many families in Missouri earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Missouri with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 397,440 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[8]

- In Missouri, child care for a four-year-old in a center can cost an average of $4,000 to $5,000 annually and is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. For example, the average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in the greater St. Louis area was $4,940, with fees as high as $7,540, and the average cost in Franklin County (a rural county) was $3,900, with fees as high as $5,980.[9] These expenses are for only one child. Families with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Missouri[10]

Child Care Centers

	Greater St. Louis		Franklin County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$5,200	$10,660	$3,900	n.a.
4 years	$4,940	$7,540	$3,900	$5,980

Family Child Care Homes

	Greater St. Louis		Warren County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,420	$5,200	$3,900	$4,940
4 years	$3,900	$4,940	$3,380	$3,900

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in the greater St. Louis area of Missouri, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *47 percent* of their income for child care.

> *"Childcare is a necessity in today's way of living. With the two-income household it is mandatory.... It also needs to be affordable. My husband and I are planning children soon and the cost is frightening."*[11]
>
> *A 28-year-old woman from Missouri*

Many low-income working families in Missouri are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Missouri ranks among the bottom 10 states in making low-income families eligible for child care assistance. As of January 1998, 43 states allowed families with higher incomes to receive state subsidies. Only those low-income working families with incomes below $17,784 (for a family of three) are eligible for any child care help in Missouri, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $32,700. This cutoff is lower than in all of Missouri's neighbors, including Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, and Tennessee.[12]
- Even with Missouri's low income cutoffs, the state is not confident that all eligible families know they can get child care assistance, or that it could serve all eligible families if they did know they could get child care help.[13]
- The situation is likely to get worse in coming years, as more families are required to move from welfare to work. In a recent survey, Missouri reported that, without additional funds, it is not confident that it will be able to meet the demand for child care assistance generated by the increase in welfare work requirements. Furthermore, the state reports that it is likely that low-income working families who are *not* on welfare would be the first to lose services.[14]

Even those Missouri families fortunate enough to receive child care assistance face limited access to quality child care due to inadequate state policies.

- Families in Missouri who receive child care assistance still face enormous difficulties finding providers who will take care of their children, as the amount the state will pay for care is below market prices. As of January 1998, the amount that Missouri paid for child care was $167 a month less than the amount charged by a significant number of providers.[15] As a consequence, providers either have to ask parents to make up the difference (in addition to the parent fees required by the state), or refuse to take care of children receiving help from the state.
- As of January 1998, a number of nearby states—including Iowa, Arkansas, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, and South Dakota —paid at levels that allowed families receiving child care subsidies a broader range of choices than in Missouri.[16]
- About two out of five Missouri families receiving child care assistance choose a registered, unregulated child care provider (which is any provider serving less than four unrelated children in his/her home). The state will pay such providers as long as they are at least 14 years old and present a fire inspection certificate,[17] and does not even require the providers to undergo a child abuse or criminal background check, or a health inspection.
- Missouri does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 32 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Missouri spent 63 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[18]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Missouri are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Missouri affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[19] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[20] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[21]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Missouri.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Missouri's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Missouri—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Missouri's children from harm.
- Missouri is one of the many states that do not adequately protect their children. The state, for example, allows individuals caring for fewer than four children in their home to operate without having to meet any licensing health and safety protections. In addition, only

nonrelated children are included in that count. Therefore, a single provider caring for three nonrelated children and an unlimited number of related children would not need a license.[22] This means that a provider with a history of child abuse could legally care for significant numbers of children in his/her home, and that a program could legally operate with safety hazards such as uncovered electrical outlets or poisonous substances that are not locked away.

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[23] Missouri is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[24] It is also one of 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior training.[25]
- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[26] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Missouri was only $13,660 (only slightly above minimum wage).[27] Furthermore, national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[28]
- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in Missouri. For example, in 1995, one in five center teachers in Kansas City, Missouri left their positions. In addition, 50 percent of centers reported at least one teacher resignation during the year, and one-third of centers reported staff resigning and leaving the field of early care and education entirely.[29] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[30]

A Missouri child care provider reports that her program lost two long-term staff members because they took jobs at a local hamburger outlet that paid higher salaries and provided benefits.[31]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Missouri.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in Missouri. In 1997, only about 270 of Missouri's child care centers were accredited.[32]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Missouri face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Missouri school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Missouri families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 191,903 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Missouri live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[33]
- Missouri children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[34] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[35] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[36] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.

Parents worry endlessly about leaving their school-age children home alone, yet see few other options

A Missouri mother, who works a 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. shift, wrote to Citizens for Missouri's Children: "I have to leave my 11-year-old at home because I can't afford day care. I bought a burglar alarm, microwave and a beeper so she could reach me when she needed me—but the beeper I bought was cheap so the frequency is not that high so sometimes I don't receive her beeping me....I don't really function well on my job because I am always worried about her. I really can't count on her father (whom I am separated from) to come over and check on her or pick her up in the evenings. A couple of times I had to leave work to come and let her in because she left her keys at school. I am trying to comply with this new welfare reform but its really hard on me mentally....I call her every 30 minutes until 9:00 p.m. when it's her bed time. I make sure she has the alarm on, both locks on the door and a board that I brought and had measured to fit under my door knob. That's still not enough to ease my mind but our government wants us to work....I am not there for her in the evenings when she gets home because I work 3 to 11 p.m. She has to do her homework and leave it on the table for me to check. When I find mistakes I have to get her up earlier than usual...for her to correct her own mistakes so she will know for herself."[37]

- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Missouri, only one out of four public schools (2,082 or 28 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[38]
- Further evidence of the shortage of school-age care in Missouri is provided by the Child Day Care Association of St. Louis, which helps families find care. The Association reports that

parents trying to find a safe place for their children after school have few options.[39] Parents who work nontraditional hours—hours other than the typical "9-to-5" shift—have particular problems locating school-age care.[40]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Missouri.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[41] This means as many as 32,000 babies in Missouri are in child care if national patterns hold true.[42]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Missouri's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping very young children grow, Missouri allows a single caregiver in a center to care for as many as eight two-year-olds (age 27 months) alone.[43] In comparison, early childhood educators recommend that a single caregiver be responsible for no more than four to six toddlers this age. It is hard to imagine how one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, play, and care for eight active two-year-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency such as a fire.
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Missouri to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. For example, child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in St. Louis averaged $5,200, but could cost as much as $10,660.[44]
- The Child Day Care Association of St. Louis reports that parents throughout the state have serious difficulties finding infant care, and when it is available, parents cannot afford it.[45]

Other families in Missouri face shortages of care as well—such as families where the parents work nontraditional hours.

- Parents in Missouri working hours other than the usual "9-to-5" shift have particular difficulties finding care, reports the Child Day Care Association of St. Louis. There is a lack of care available during nontraditional hours—such as evenings, overnight, and weekends—all across Missouri.[46] Families with nontraditional schedules who have school-age children also face challenges trying to find care.

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Missouri

Number of children younger than one[47]	71,118
Number of children younger than six[48]	444,804
Number of children ages six to 17[49]	949,395
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[50]	32,000
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[51]	266,900
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[52]	65%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[53]	77%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Missouri

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[54]	397,440
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Missouri[55]	$3,230

Annual Child Care Costs in Missouri[56]

Child Care Centers

	Greater St. Louis		Franklin County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$5,200	$10,660	$3,900	n.a.
4 years	$4,940	$7,540	$3,900	$5,980

Family Child Care Homes

	Greater St. Louis		Warren County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,420	$5,200	$3,900	$4,940
4 years	$3,900	$4,940	$3,380	$3,900

Many Children in Missouri Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Missouri require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[57]	No
Does Missouri require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[58]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in Missouri in 1996[59]	$13,660
Annual turnover rate for center teachers in Kansas City, Missouri in 1995 (approximate)[60]	20%
Number of child care centers in Missouri that were accredited as of 1997[61]	270

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Missouri[62]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[63]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	4	3-5	Yes
27 months	8	4-6	No
3 years	10	7-10	Yes
4 years	10	8-10	Yes

Other Child Care Indicators in Missouri

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[64]	1,546
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[65]	209
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[66]	2570
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[67]	28%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Bower, "Child-Care Use to Skyrocket; Missouri Tries to Brace Itself," St. Louis, MO: *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, October 24, 1997, p. 01A.

[7] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[8] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[9] Information from Child Day Care Association, St. Louis, MO; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[10] Information from Child Day Care Association, St. Louis, MO; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[11] From Lifetime Television's online project "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment" which collects stories about child care from families around the country. It is found at www.lifetimetv.com.

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[15] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998). Proposed regulations by the Department of Health and Human Services suggest that a state's maximum reimbursement rate should be set at the 75th percentile of the current local market rate to ensure families access to care. This rate enables a parent to afford the rates charged by 75 percent of local providers.

[16] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998). Proposed regulations by the Department of Health and Human Services suggest that a state's maximum reimbursement rate should be set at the 75th percentile of the current local market rate to ensure families access to care. This rate enables a parent to afford the rates charged by 75 percent of local providers.

[17] Information provided by Cande Iveson, Citizens for Missouri's Children, St. Louis, MO, March 1998.

[18] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[19] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[20] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[21] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[22] Information provided by Cande Iveson, Citizens for Missouri's Children, St. Louis, MO, March 1998.

[23] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools. (October 16, 1997).

[24] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[25] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[26] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[27] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[28] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[29] Metropolitan Council on Child Care, *The Status of Child Care in Metropolitan Kansas City, 1996* (Kansas City, MO: The Metropolitan Council on Child Care, 1996).

[30] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[31] Information provided by Cande Iveson, Citizens for Missouri's Children, St. Louis, MO, March 1998.

[32] This total includes 38 programs accredited by NAEYC and 232 centers using the Missouri Voluntary Accreditation program. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on Missouri Voluntary Accreditation from Cande Iveson, Citizens for Missouri's Children, St. Louis, MO, April 1998.

[33] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[34] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[35] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[36] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School." *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[37] Information provided by Cande Iveson, Citizens for Missouri's Children, St. Louis, MO, March 1998.

[38] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[39] Information from Child Day Care Association, St. Louis, MO; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[40] Information provided by Cande Iveson, Citizens for Missouri's Children, St. Louis, MO, March 1998.

[41] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[42] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[43] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[44] Information from Child Day Care Association, St. Louis, MO; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[45] Information from Child Day Care Association, St. Louis, MO; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[46] Information from Child Day Care Association, St. Louis, MO; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[47] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[48] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[49] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[50] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[51] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[52] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[53] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[54] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[55] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[56] Information from Child Day Care Association, St. Louis, MO; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[57] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[58] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[59] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[60] Metropolitan Council on Child Care, *The Status of Child Care in Metropolitan Kansas City, 1996* (Kansas City, MO: The Metropolitan Council on Child Care, 1996).

[61] This total includes 38 programs accredited by NAEYC and 232 centers using the Missouri Voluntary Accreditation program. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on Missouri Voluntary Accreditation from Cande Iveson, Citizens for Missouri's Children, St. Louis, MO, April 1998.

[62] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[63] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[64] According to data from the Missouri Department of Health and Human Services, reported by the Child Day Care Association of St. Louis, MO in a January 1998 joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies.

[65] According to data from the Missouri Department of Health and Human Services, reported by the Child Day Care Association of St. Louis, MO in a January 1998 joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies.

[66] According to data from the Missouri Department of Health and Human Services, reported by the Child Day Care Association of St. Louis, MO in a January 1998 joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies.

[67] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

NEBRASKA:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Nebraska parents.

- Every day, about 82,200 children younger than six are in child care in Nebraska if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Nebraska work to help support their families. An estimated 71 percent of Nebraska mothers with children younger than six, and 83 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Nebraska and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]
- Nebraska has the highest percentage of families in which both parents (or the only parent in single-headed families) are in the labor force, according to the most recent U.S. census. Seventy-one percent of all Nebraska children under six live in families where all parents work.[6]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Nebraska.

> *"I never realized till now that I pay more in child care than I do for my house. What a shock. But I can't leave Leo [their 11-year-old son] in charge of the other three (children). That (is) not fair to Leo. Besides Patrick really needs a lot of attention being handicapped."*
>
> *A parent from Omaha*[7]

Child care is costly for many families in Nebraska.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Nebraska in 1997 was $2,269[8]—less than half the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Omaha.
- Many families in Nebraska earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Nebraska with both parents working full-time at the federal

minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year, and there are about 128,340 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[9]

- In Nebraska, child care for an infant or preschooler can easily cost an average of $4,000 to $5,000 a year. Child care is expensive for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. In 1997, for example, the average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Omaha was $4,940, with fees as high as $6,500; and the average cost in Fremont was $4,290, with fees as high as $5,720.[10] These expenses are for only one child—families with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Nebraska[11]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Omaha		Fremont	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$5,200	$6,760	$4,550	$5,980
4 years	$4,940	$6,500	$4,290	$5,720
8 years[12]	$3,055	$3,594	$2,696	$2,995

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Omaha		Fremont	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,680	$5,980	$3,900	$4,680
4 years	$4,680	$5,980	$3,900	$4,680
8 years	$3,295	$4,193	$2,097	$2,995

- To afford the average cost of care for an infant and a four-year-old in Omaha, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *47 percent* of their income for child care.

Low-income parents in Nebraska have a hard time affording child care

Louise, a mother in Grand Island who makes just $15,600 per year, struggles to pay for child care for her three children. She spends a quarter of her income to afford child care. She says, "The kids like where they are but I still worry about them every day."[13]

Many low-income working families in Nebraska are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Nebraska allows only low-income working families earning less than $24,661 (for a family of three) to be eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $32,048. Nebraska's cutoff is lower than that in a number of states, including North Dakota and Minnesota.[14]

- Even with Nebraska's low income cutoffs, the state is not confident that all eligible families know they can get child care assistance, or that it could serve all eligible families if they knew they could get child care help.[15]

- Families in Nebraska who receive child care assistance still face significant difficulties finding providers who will take care of their children, as the amount the state will pay for care is based on how much providers charged in *1995*. As a consequence, providers either have to ask parents to make up the difference between the amount the provider charges and the amount the state will pay (in addition to the parent fees required by the state), or refuse to take care of children receiving help from the state. In contrast, states such Montana and Nevada pay at levels that allow families receiving child care subsidies a broader range of choices than in Nebraska.[16]

- Nebraska does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 63 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Nebraska spent 47 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[17]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Nebraska are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Nebraska affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[18] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[19] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[20]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Nebraska.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Nebraska's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Nebraska—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Nebraska's children from harm.

- Nebraska is one of many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, for example, the state allowed a caregiver in a center to care for as many as 12 four-year-olds alone, although experts recommend no more than seven to 10. This makes it very difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.[21]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[22] Nebraska is one of 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior early childhood training.[23]

- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[24] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Nebraska was only $11,600 (only slightly above minimum wage).[25] Furthermore, national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[26]
- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers—while data are not available for Nebraska, nationwide about one-third of child care teachers leave their centers each year.[27] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers are only 6.6 percent.[28]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Nebraska.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in Nebraska. In 1997, only about 17 of Nebraska's 707 licensed child care centers (or 2 percent) were accredited.[29] Only 15 of the 402 centers in Omaha and Lincoln, and only two of the 91 centers in the Chadron/ Hastings area, were accredited.[30]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Nebraska face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Nebraska school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Nebraska families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 36,219 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Nebraska live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[31]
- Nebraska children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[32] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[33] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse,[34] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Nebraska, for example, only one out of every 20 public schools (1,296 or 5 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[35]
- Local experts report that a shortage of qualified providers and high turnover rates has led to a shortage of school-age care in Nebraska.[36]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Nebraska.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[37] This means as many as 10,200 babies in Nebraska are in child care if national patterns hold true.[38]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Nebraska's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping very young children grow, Nebraska allows a single caregiver to care for six 18-month-old toddlers. In contrast, early childhood experts recommend no more than three to five toddlers this age per adult.[39] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, diaper, play, and care for six active 18-month-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency such as a fire.
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Nebraska to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. For example, child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Omaha in 1997 averaged $5,200, but could cost as much as $6,760.[40]
- The Midwest Child Care Association, which helps Nebraska families find child care, reports that families have problems finding quality infant care statewide, with particularly serious shortages in the Omaha area.[41]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Nebraska

Number of children younger than one[42]	22,673
Number of children younger than six[43]	136,956
Number of children ages six to 17[44]	305,230
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[45]	10,200
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[46]	82,200
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[47]	71%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[48]	83%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Nebraska

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[49]	128,340
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Nebraska[50]	$2,269

Annual Child Care Costs in Nebraska[51]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Omaha		Fremont	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$5,200	$6,760	$4,550	$5,980
4 years	$4,940	$6,500	$4,290	$5,720
8 years[52]	$3,055	$3,594	$2,696	$2,995

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Omaha		Fremont	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,680	$5,980	$3,900	$4,680
4 years	$4,680	$5,980	$3,900	$4,680
8 years	$3,295	$4,193	$2,097	$2,995

Many Children in Nebraska Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Nebraska require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[53]	No
Does Nebraska require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[54]	Yes
Average salary for a child care worker in Nebraska in 1996[55]	$11,600
Percentage of child care centers in Nebraska that were accredited as of 1997[56]	2%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Nebraska[57]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[58]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	6	3-5	No
27 months	6	4-6	Yes
3 years	10	7-10	Yes
4 years	12	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in Nebraska

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[59]	707
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[60]	363
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[61]	3,481
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[62]	5%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Voices for Children in Nebraska, *Kids Count in Nebraska, 1997 Report* (Omaha, NE: Voices for Children in Nebraska, 1997), p. 22.

[7] National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, *Book of Families*, (Washington, DC: National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998). Information collected by the Midwest Child Care Association.

[8] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[9] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[10] Information from Midwest Child Care Association, Omaha, NE; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[11] Information from Midwest Child Care Association, Omaha, NE; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[12] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[13] National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, *Book of Families*, (Washington, DC: National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998). Information collected by the Midwest Child Care Association.

[14] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[15] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[16] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[17] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[18] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[19] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[20] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[21] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[22] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools (October 16, 1997).

[23] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[24] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[25] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[26] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[27] National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW).

[28] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[29] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[30] Information from Midwest Child Care Association, Omaha, NE; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[31] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[32] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[33] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[34] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[35] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[36] Conversation with Pat Urzedowski, Child Care Administrator, Lincoln, NE: Department of Health and Human Services, March 1998.

[37] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[38] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[39] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[40] Information from Midwest Child Care Association, Omaha, NE; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[41] Information from Midwest Child Care Association, Omaha, NE; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[42] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[43] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[44] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[45] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[46] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[47] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[48] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[49] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[50] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[51] Information from Midwest Child Care Association, Omaha, NE; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[52] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[53] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing.* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[54] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing.* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[55] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[56] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[57] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[58] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[59] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[60] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[61] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[62] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

NORTH DAKOTA: CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many North Dakota parents.

- Every day, about 29,900 children younger than six are in child care in North Dakota if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.

- Most mothers in North Dakota work to help support their families. An estimated 69 percent of North Dakota mothers with children younger than six, and 79 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]

- For many mothers in North Dakota and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

- The number of families seeking help finding child care was 25 percent higher in 1997 than in 1996, according to North Dakota's child care resource and referral (CCR&R) agencies, which help families find care. These agencies—which cover all of the counties in the state—expect that the number of families needing help finding care will continue to rise as more families move from welfare to work.[6]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in North Dakota.

Child care is costly for many families in North Dakota.

- Child care often costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in North Dakota in 1997 was $2,381[7]—less than three-fifths the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center.

- Many families in North Dakota earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in North Dakota with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 46,230 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[8]

- In North Dakota, child care for one four-year-old in a child care center cost an average of $4,083 in 1997. Child care is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. The average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in North Dakota's urban areas was

$4,193, with fees as high as $5,255; and the average cost in the state's rural areas was $3,863, with fees as high as $5,031.[9] These expenses are for only one child—families with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in North Dakota[10]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Urban Areas		Rural Areas	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,619	$6,500	$4,885	$6,500	$4,176	$5,460
4 years	$4,083	$5,255	$4,193	$5,255	$3,863	$5,031
8 years[11]	$2,420	$3,534	$2,636	$3,534	$2,168	$3,295

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Urban Areas		Rural Areas	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,079	$6,760	$4,152	$6,760	$3,944	$5,265
4 years	$3,957	$6,240	$4,016	$6,240	$3,849	$5,265
8 years	$2,156	$5,990	$2,216	$3,594	$2,085	$5,990

- To buy child care infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in North Dakota, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *41 percent* of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in North Dakota are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- North Dakota allows only low-income working families with incomes below $29,340 (for a family of three) to be eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $31,047.[12] The state reports that some eligible families in North Dakota may not even know that they could receive help paying for child care.[13]
- North Dakota does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 11 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, North Dakota spent 393 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[14]

Even those North Dakota families fortunate enough to receive child care assistance face financial hardships or limited options due to inadequate state policies.

- Families receiving child care assistance in North Dakota continue to shoulder a huge financial burden, as the state has some of the highest family copayment levels in the country. As of January 1998, a North Dakota family of three earning only $19,995 a year (or only $1,670 a month) who received help paying for care could still be required to pay as much as 12 percent of its income—or $207 a month—in family copayments. This is higher than recommended by experts, and is significantly more than families at the same income level would have to pay in most other states, including neighboring states such as Montana and Minnesota.[15] Local CCR&R agencies that help families find care report that low-income families are unable to afford the high state copayments.[16]

- Families receiving child care assistance in North Dakota communities with a higher cost of living are likely to find it difficult to find providers willing to serve their children. Although child care prices differ across the state, the state uses a single statewide rate to reimburse providers serving children whose care is subsidized.[17] This means that, in some communities, a significant number of child care programs charge more than the state rate and cannot afford to accept children receiving assistance. As a result, parents cannot use these providers unless the parent pays the difference between the state rate and the provider price out of their own pocket, in addition to the parent's already high copayments.

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in North Dakota are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in North Dakota affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[18] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[19] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[20]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in North Dakota.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of North Dakota's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, North Dakota—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect North Dakota's children from harm.
- North Dakota is one of the many states that do not adequately protect their children. In North Dakota, for example, family child care providers caring for as many as five children in their home need not be licensed.[21] This means that a provider with a history of child abuse could legally care for five children in his/her home, and that a program could legally operate with safety hazards such as uncovered electrical outlets or poisonous substances that are not locked away.

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[22] North Dakota is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[23] It is also one of 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior training.[24]

- In 1997, only 22 percent of the 1,800 child care providers listed with the North Dakota CCR&R agency had done any college coursework and only 4 percent had a Child Development Associate credential.[25]

- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[26] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in North Dakota was only $11,980 (only slightly above minimum wage)[27] and national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[28]

- Family child care providers in North Dakota work extremely hard for very low pay. A survey of 43 child care providers in Grand Forks found that the average family child care provider earned a *gross* income (before expenses) of $17,328 in 1996. Once expenses (for food, equipment, liability insurance, toys, paper supplies, books, utilities, home owners insurance, and home interest and depreciation) were taken into account, the providers were left with an average net income of just $8,377 before taxes. Given that child care workers spend about 50 hours per week with the children and an additional 10 hours per week for clean up and preparation, their average hourly net income before taxes was only $2.68.[29]

- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in North Dakota—for instance, 36 percent of the 210 staff members in Fargo's child care centers left their jobs in 1994.[30] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[31]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in North Dakota.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in North Dakota. In 1997, only about 9 of North Dakota's licensed child care centers were accredited.[32] Only 41 of the centers, family child care homes and other child care programs listed with the North Dakota child care resource and referral agencies were accredited as of December 1997.[33]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across North Dakota face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

Many families in North Dakota have trouble finding good child care in their communities.

- In several communities across North Dakota, the number of children with working mothers greatly exceeds the number of licensed child care slots available. The most significant shortage is in Steele County, where there is only one licensed slot for every 33 children ages 11 and younger with working mothers. Licensed care is only available for a fraction of the children of working mothers in many other communities as well. For instance, there are seven children ages 11 or younger with working mothers per licensed slot in Sargent County and Foster County; five children for every slot in Ransom County and Wells County; and three children for every licensed slot in Traill County, Richland County, and Barnes County.[34]

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many North Dakota school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many North Dakota families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 18,545 school-age children (ages five to 17) in North Dakota live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[35]
- North Dakota children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[36] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[37] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[38] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In North Dakota, only one in ten public schools (582 or 10 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[39]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in North Dakota.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[40] This means as many as 3,700 babies in North Dakota are in child care if national patterns hold true.[41]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care North Dakota's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping babies grow, in 1997 North Dakota was one of only 13 states that met recommended levels for the number of babies and toddlers a single caregiver was allowed to care for.[42]
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in North Dakota to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in North Dakota in 1997 averaged $4,619, but could cost as much as $6,500.[43]

Other families in North Dakota face shortages of care as well—such as families with parents working nontraditional hours.

- Parents who work hours other than the typical "9-to-5" shift face particular challenges trying to find child care. In southeastern North Dakota, for example, only 6 percent of child care programs are open after 6:30 p.m., only 5 percent are open on weekends (and usually just on Saturday), and only 2 percent are open overnight.[44]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in North Dakota

Number of children younger than one[45]	8,264
Number of children younger than six[46]	49,860
Number of children ages six to 17[47]	118,783
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[48]	3,700
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[49]	29,900
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[50]	69%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[51]	79%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in North Dakota

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[52]	46,230
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in North Dakota[53]	$2,381

Annual Child Care Costs in North Dakota[54]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Urban Areas		Rural Areas	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,619	$6,500	$4,885	$6,500	$4,176	$5,460
4 years	$4,083	$5,255	$4,193	$5,255	$3,863	$5,031
8 years[55]	$2,420	$3,534	$2,636	$3,534	$2,168	$3,295

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Urban Areas		Rural Areas	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,079	$6,760	$4,152	$6,760	$3,944	$5,265
4 years	$3,957	$6,240	$4,016	$6,240	$3,849	$5,265
8 years	$2,156	$5,990	$2,216	$3,594	$2,085	$5,990

Many Children in North Dakota Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does North Dakota require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[56]	No
Does North Dakota require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[57]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in North Dakota in 1996[58]	$11,980
Annual turnover rate for child care center staff in Fargo, ND in 1994[59]	36%
Number of child care centers in North Dakota that were accredited as of 1997[60]	9

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in North Dakota[61]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[62]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	4	3-5	Yes
27 months	5	4-6	Yes
3 years	7	7-10	Yes
4 years	10	8-10	Yes

Other Child Care Indicators in North Dakota

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[43]	89
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[44]	897
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[45]	1,990
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[46]	10%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Information from Child Care Resource and Referral, Bismarck, ND; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[7] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[8] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[9] Information from Child Care Resource and Referral, Bismarck, ND; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[10] Information from Child Care Resource and Referral, Bismarck, ND; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[11] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[15] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[16] Information from Child Care Resource and Referral, Bismarck, ND; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[17] Information from Child Care Resource and Referral, Bismarck, ND; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[18] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[19] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[20] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[21] Information from Child Care Resource and Referral, Bismarck, ND; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[22] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools. (October 16, 1997).

[23] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[24] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[25] North Dakota Child Care Resource and Referral Network *Carefinder Data Report, Third Quarter, 1997* (Jamestown, ND: NDCCR&R Network, December 1997).

[26] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[27] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[28] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[29] Information from a study by Lee Anderson, Grand Forks, ND, September 1, 1997.

[30] Area Preschool Advocates, *1994, Child Care Survey* (North Dakota: Area Preschool Advocates, October 1994).

[31] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[32] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[33] North Dakota Child Care Resource and Referral Network *Carefinder Data Report, Third Quarter, 1997* (Jamestown, ND: NDCCR&R Network, December 1997).

[34] Lembke, *Child Care Statistics, Region V* (Bismarck, ND: North Dakota Kids Count Fact Book and Child Care Resource and Referral, December 1997).

[35] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[36]School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[37] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[38] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[39] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[40] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[41] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[42] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[43] Information from Child Care Resource and Referral, Bismarck, ND; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[44] Lembke, *Child Care Supply in Regions V and VI* (Bismarck, ND: Child Care Resource and Referral, December 1997).

[45] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[46] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[47] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[48] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[49] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[50] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[51] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[52] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[53] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[54] Information from Child Care Resource and Referral, Bismarck, ND; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[55] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[56] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[57] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[58] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[59] Area Preschool Advocates, *1994, Child Care Survey* (North Dakota: Area Preschool Advocates, October 1994).

[60] Number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[61] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[62] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[63] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[64] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[65] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[66] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

OHIO:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Ohio parents.

- Every day, about 551,000 children younger than six are in child care in Ohio if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours or more a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Ohio work to help support their families. An estimated 58 percent of Ohio mothers with children younger than six, and 68 percent of women with any children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force. Labor force participation is even higher when looking at women who *only* have school-age children (and no preschool-age children)—among these women, 73 percent are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Ohio and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Ohio.

Child care is costly for many families in Ohio.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Ohio in 1997 was $3,834[6]—over $1,000 less than the average cost of care for a one-year-old in a center, and less than the average cost for a four-year-old.
- Many families in Ohio earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Ohio with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 883,890 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[7]

Annual Cost of Child Care in Ohio[8]

Child Care Centers (1998)

	Statewide		Columbus		Lorain County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,940	n.a.	$6,500	$8,684	$5,824	n.a.
4 years	$4,056	n.a.	$4,940	$7,800	$4,420	n.a.
8 years[9]	$2,216	n.a.	$2,636	$4,043	$2,216	n.a.

Family Child Care Homes (1998)

	Statewide		Columbus		Lorain County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,108	n.a.	$4,472	$7,800	$4,316	n.a.
4 years	$3,900	n.a.	$4,108	$7,800	$4,212	n.a.
8 years	$2,186	n.a.	$2,366	$4,493	$2,396	n.a.

- In Ohio, child care for one four-year-old in a child care center costs an average of $4,056 in 1998. Child care is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. For example, the average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Lorain County is $4,420; and the average cost in Columbus is $4,940, with fees as high as $7,800.[10] These expenses are for only one child—families with more than one child in care spend significantly more.
- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in Ohio, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *42 percent* of their income for child care.

Ohio parents struggle to work and pay for child care

Kristen, a 33-year-old mother from Perrysburg writes: "I have three children, one with special needs. My husband and I both work and are unable to obtain quality child care and afford it. We both have to work in order to make ends meet. Right now, my mother-in-law is helping, but she has already complained about the amount of time she is losing in her personal life. We need a system for working parents to get quality child care without having to quit their jobs and go on welfare. It would be nice to have something set up on a sliding scale so all could go to work in the morning and know that our children are safe and cared for."[11]

* * * * * * *

Melissa, a 27-year-old mother from Hillard writes: "Making the decision to work is difficult enough without worrying about your childcare. I take my six-month-old son to one of the best places in town with the lowest ratios, and it is $616 per month. ...On top of it all, even though it is a good center, I still have my tough times. Finding affordable quality daycare is almost reason enough not to work, even if I am in a promising career and it makes more sense economically to work..."[12]

Many low-income working families in Ohio are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Ohio ranks in the bottom 20 states in making low-income families eligible for child care assistance—34 states allow families with higher incomes to receive state subsidies. Only those low-income working families earning less than about $20,475 (for a family of three) are eligible for any help in paying for child care in Ohio, although federal law allows the state to serve families earning up to $36,300. This cutoff is lower than many nearby states, including Michigan and Pennsylvania.[13]

A lack of child care assistance makes it difficult for low-income parents in Ohio to work

A single Lancaster mother of two preschool-age children discusses the dilemma faced by many families who earn too much to qualify for child care assistance, yet who earn too little to be able to afford child care on their own: "I recently...got a good job with health insurance and good pay. I have worked really hard to get where I'm at. I was told that I make too much money to continue to receive child care [assistance]. This will mean that I have to quit my good-paying job and take a lower-paying job with no health insurance for my children. The only help that I receive from the government is my child care. But if they take that away I will be forced to quit my job and go to a lower-paying job, so I will [have to] ask for Medicaid for my children. Wouldn't it make more sense to let me have child care instead of making me go to a lower-paying job?"[14]

* * * * *

A single mother in Ohio, who attends university full-time and has a monthly income of only $394, shares her concerns about losing child care assistance for her two children: "The allowance I receive for child care will run out next year. I am not sure exactly what I will do for my son's child care needs. The charge for child care where my son attends will take a third of my income if I work full-time. Hopefully, in the near future, there will be affordable child care for every household. With the escalating costs of child care I do not see how a working family can continue to afford quality child care."[15]

- Even with its low income cutoffs, Ohio reports that it could not serve all eligible families if they knew they could get help paying for child care, and that some counties may already place eligible families on waiting lists because there are not enough funds to provide assistance to these families.[16] Research has shown that parents waiting for child care assistance are likely to face serious financial difficulties, have difficulty staying employed, go on welfare, and/or have serious concerns about their children's care because they are unable to afford quality child care.[17]

- Ohio does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, the state spent only 68 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994.[18]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Ohio may be in care that does not support their development, or that could be harmful to their health and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Ohio affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[19] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[20] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[21]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Ohio.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Ohio's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Ohio—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Ohio's children from harm.
- Ohio is one of many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, for example, the state did not meet recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for *any* of the six age groups examined.[22] The state allowed a caregiver in a center to care for as many as 12 three-year-olds or 14 four-year-olds alone, although early childhood experts recommend no more than seven to 10. This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.
- In Ohio, individuals caring for as many as six children in their homes would not have to be regulated (unless the child care provider was participating in the Child Care Food Program or providing subsidized care).[23] This means, for example, that a provider with a history of child abuse could care for as many as six children in his/her home, and that a program could operate with safety hazards such as uncovered electrical outlets or poisonous substances that are not locked away.

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they become licensed,[24] Ohio is among 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[25] It is also among the 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior training.[26]
- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[27] In 1996, half of child care workers in Ohio earned less than $12,380.[28] Furthermore, national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[29]

- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in Ohio. For example, in Franklin County, the turnover rate for teachers in child care centers was 33 percent, the turnover rate for center directors was 32 percent, and for assistants the turnover rate was 55 percent in 1997.[30] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[31]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Ohio.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in Ohio. As of January 1998, only about 182 of Ohio's 4,994 licensed child care centers, preschools, and school-age programs (or 4 percent) were accredited.[32]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Ohio face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Ohio school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Ohio families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 397,254 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Ohio live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[33]
- Ohio children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[34] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[35] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[36] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Ohio, only one in five public schools (3,636 or 19 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[37]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Ohio.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[38] This means as many as 67,200 babies in Ohio are in child care if national patterns hold true.[39]

- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Ohio's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.

- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping very young children grow, Ohio allows a single caregiver to care for *seven* 18-month-old toddlers. In contrast, early childhood experts recommend that a single caregiver be responsible for no more than three to five children this age.[40] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, diaper, play, and care for seven active 18-month-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency such as a fire.

- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Ohio to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Annual child care costs for a 12-month-old in a child care center average $4,940, but can equal as much as $8,000 to $9,000.[41]

Other families in Ohio face shortages of care as well—such as families with teenage parents.

- Teenage parents have particular problems finding child care, and as a result often lose the opportunity to complete their education. A 1993 study of out-of-school teen parents receiving welfare in Ohio found that inability to find child care was the most commonly cited reason when these teens were asked why they were not in school. The majority of the teens also reported that child care is critical to their ability to stay in school.[42]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Ohio

Number of children younger than one[43]	149,267
Number of children younger than six[44]	918,407
Number of children ages six to 17[45]	1,929,434
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[46]	67,200
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[47]	551,000
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[48]	58%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[49]	68%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Ohio

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[50]	883,890
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Ohio[51]	$3,834

Annual Child Care Costs in Ohio[52]

Child Care Centers (1998)

	Statewide		Columbus		Lorain County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,940	n.a.	$6,500	$8,684	$5,824	n.a.
4 years	$4,056	n.a.	$4,940	$7,800	$4,420	n.a.
8 years[53]	$2,216	n.a.	$2,636	$4,043	$2,216	n.a.

Family Child Care Homes (1998)

	Statewide		Columbus		Lorain County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,108	n.a.	$4,472	$7,800	$4,316	n.a.
4 years	$3,900	n.a.	$4,108	$7,800	$4,212	n.a.
8 years	$2,186	n.a.	$2,366	$4,493	$2,396	n.a.

Many Children in Ohio Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Ohio require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[54]	No
Does Ohio require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[55]	No
Half of child care workers in Ohio in 1996 earned less than:[56]	$12,380
Annual turnover rate for teachers in Franklin County, Ohio's child care centers in 1997[57]	33%
Percentage of child care centers in Ohio that were accredited as of 1998[58]	4%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Ohio[59]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[60]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	5	3-4	No
18 months	7	3-5	No
27 months	7	4-6	No
3 years	12	7-10	No
4 years	14	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in Ohio

Number of licensed preschool and school-age child care programs in 1997[61]	1,307
Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[62]	3,687
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[63]	54
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[64]	7,405
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[65]	19%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Data from the Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Information on labor force participation rates of women with *any* school-age children also from Census Bureau, provided by the Children's Defense Fund, Columbus office.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from Children's Defense Fund, Columbus office, April 1998.

[9] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[10] Information from Children's Defense Fund, Columbus office, April 1998.

[11] From Lifetime Television's online project "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment" which collects stories about child care from families around the country. It is found at www.lifetimetv.com.

[12] From Lifetime Television's online project "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment" which collects stories about child care from families around the country. It is found at www.lifetimetv.com.

[13] Information on Ohio's current income cutoff provided by Children's Defense Fund, Columbus office, April 1998. Information on other states' income cutoffs as of January 1998 from Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Child Carefinder, Lancaster, OH, *Book of Families* (Washington, DC: National Association of Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998). At the time this mother told her story, she was earning $19,000 and did not qualify for child care assistance under the state's existing income cutoff. Since then, the state has raised its income cutoff level slightly so that a family earning this much would qualify for assistance, but her experience still reflects that of many low-income families earning just above the income cutoff.

[15] National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, *Book of Families* (Washington, DC: NACCRRA, February 1998).

[16] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[17] Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, *Valuing Families: The High Cost of Waiting for Child Care Sliding Fee Assistance* (Minneapolis, MN: 1995).

[18] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[19] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[20] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[21] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[22] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts. Data on the number of four-year-olds allowed per caregiver from the Children's Defense Fund, Columbus office, April 1998.

[23] Information from Action for Children, Columbus, OH; collected by a joint survey from the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[24] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools (October 16, 1997).

[25] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[26] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[27] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[28] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[29] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[30] *Child Care Center Wages and Working Conditions* (Columbus, OH: Action For Children, 1997.

[31] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[32] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from the Children's Defense Fund, Columbus office, April 1998.

[33] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[34]School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[35] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[36] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[37] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[38] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[39] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[40] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[41] Information from Children's Defense Fund, Columbus office, April 1998.

[42] Bloom, et al., *LEAP: Interim Findings on a Welfare Initiative to Improve School Attendance Among Teenage Parents* (Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC), May 1993).

[43] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[44] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[45] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[46] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[47] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[48] Information provided by the Children's Defense Fund, Columbus office, based on data from the Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4.

[49] Information provided by the Children's Defense Fund, Columbus office, based on data from the Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. The labor force participation rate for mothers with children between the ages of six and 17 that is reported here is for mothers with any children in that age range. In other Children's Defense Fund publications, the labor force participation rate is given for mothers who *only* have children in that age range. In Ohio, the labor force participation rate for this group of mothers is 73 percent.

[50] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[51] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[52] Information from Children's Defense Fund, Columbus office, April 1998.

[53] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[54] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[55] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[56] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[57] *Child Care Center Wages and Working Conditions,* Action For Children, Columbus, OH, 1997.

[58] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on data from the Children's Defense Fund, Columbus office, April 1998.

[59] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts. Data on the number of four-year-olds allowed per caregiver from the Children's Defense Fund, Columbus office, April 1998.

[60] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[61] Children's Defense Fund, Ohio, "Ohio Child Care Facts," (Ohio: CDF, Ohio, 1998). School-age and preschool programs are licensed by the Ohio Department of Education.

[62] Children's Defense Fund, Ohio, "Ohio Child Care Facts," (Ohio: CDF, Ohio, 1998). Child care centers are licensed by the Ohio Department of Human Services.

[63] Children's Defense Fund, Ohio, "Ohio Child Care Facts," (Ohio: CDF, Ohio, 1998). Group child care homes are regulated by the Ohio Department of Human Services.

[64] Children's Defense Fund, Ohio, "Ohio Child Care Facts," (Ohio: CDF, Ohio, 1998). Family child care homes are regulated by the county departments of human services.

[65] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

SOUTH DAKOTA:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many South Dakota parents.

- Every day, about 37,200 children younger than six are in child care in South Dakota if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in South Dakota work to help support their families. An estimated 71 percent of South Dakota mothers with children younger than six, and 82 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in South Dakota and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in South Dakota.

Child care is costly for many families in South Dakota.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in South Dakota in 1997 was $2,727[6]—just over two-thirds the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Sioux Falls.
- Many families in South Dakota earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in South Dakota with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 70,380 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[7]
- In South Dakota, child care for a preschooler or infant can easily cost an average of $4,000 to $5,000 per year. For example, the average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Sioux Falls in 1998 is $3,900, with fees as high as $4,940.[8] These expenses are for only one child—families with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in South Dakota[9]

Child Care Centers (1998)

	Statewide		Sioux Falls		Brookings	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,680	n.a.	$4,420	$6,500	n.a.	n.a.
4 years	n.a.	n.a.	$3,900	$4,940	n.a.	n.a.
8 years[10]	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	$2,432	$4,792

Family Child Care Homes (1998)

	Statewide		Minnehaha		Brookings	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,510	n.a.	$3,770	n.a.	$3,120	$3,900
4 years	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	$3,120	$3,900
8 years	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	$2,432	$4,792

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in Sioux Falls, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *39 percent* of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in South Dakota are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- South Dakota ranks among the bottom third of states in making low-income families eligible for child care assistance. As of January 1998, only those working families with incomes below about $20,000 (for a family of three) are eligible for any child care help in South Dakota, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $30,200.[11] Thirty-four states allowed families with higher incomes to receive state subsidies, including nearby states such as Montana and Nebraska.[12]
- Even with South Dakota's low income cutoffs, the state is not confident that all eligible families know they can get child care assistance, or that it could serve all eligible families if they did know they could get child care help.[13]
- South Dakota will face a growing challenge in coming years as more families required to move from welfare to work need help paying for child care. The state reports that, without additional funds, South Dakota may not be able to meet the demand for child care assistance generated by the increase in welfare work requirements.[14] Low-income working families who are *not* on welfare may end up losing assistance as more families on welfare need help.
- South Dakota does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 11 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, South Dakota spent 326 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[15]

Even those South Dakota families fortunate enough to receive child care assistance face financial hardship due to inadequate state policies.

- Families receiving child care assistance in South Dakota continue to shoulder a huge financial burden, as the state has the highest family copayment levels in the country. As of January

1998, a family of three earning only $19,995 a year (or only $1,670 a month) and receiving child care help could still be required to pay as much as 30 percent of their income—or $500 a month—in family copayments. This is three times the level recommended by experts, and is significantly more than families at the same income level would have to pay in any other state in the country.[16]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in South Dakota are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in South Dakota affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[17] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[18] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[19]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in South Dakota.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of South Dakota's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, South Dakota—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect South Dakota's children from harm.
- South Dakota is one of many states that do not adequately protect their children. The state, for example, allows individuals caring for up to *twelve* children in their homes to operate without having to meet *any* licensing health and safety protections.[20] This means that a provider with a history of child abuse could legally care for 11 children, and that such a program could legally operate with safety hazards such as uncovered electrical outlets or poisonous substances that are not locked away.[21] No other state allows as many unrelated children to be cared for in a home without having basic health and safety protections.

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[22] South Dakota is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[23] It is also one of 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior training.[24]
- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[25] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in South

Dakota was only $11,720 (only slightly above minimum wage).[26] Furthermore, national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[27]

- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers; nationwide, about one-third of child care teachers leave their centers each year.[28] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[29]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in South Dakota.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in South Dakota. In 1997, only about three of South Dakota's 143 licensed child care centers (or 2 percent) were accredited.[30]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across South Dakota face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many South Dakota school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many South Dakota families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 26,101 school-age children (ages five to 17) in South Dakota live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[31]
- South Dakota children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[32] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[33] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[34] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In South Dakota, only one in 20 public schools (661 or 5 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[35]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in South Dakota.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[36] This means as many as 4,600 babies in South Dakota are in child care if national patterns hold true.[37]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years

- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care South Dakota's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.

- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping babies grow, South Dakota, for example, allows a single caregiver to care for five nine-month-old babies. In contrast, early childhood experts recommend that one caregiver be responsible for no more than three or four children this age.[38] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, diaper, play, and care for five active nine-month-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency such as a fire.

- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in South Dakota to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. For example, child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Sioux Falls in 1998 averages $4,420, but can cost as much as $6,500.[39]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in South Dakota

Number of children younger than one[40]	10,156
Number of children younger than six[41]	62,065
Number of children ages six to 17[42]	142,091
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[43]	4,600
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[44]	37,200
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[45]	71%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[46]	82%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in South Dakota

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[47]	70,380
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in South Dakota[48]	$2,727

Annual Child Care Costs in South Dakota[49]

Child Care Centers (1998)

	Statewide		Sioux Falls		Brookings	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,680	n.a.	$4,420	$6,500	n.a.	n.a.
4 years	n.a.	n.a.	$3,900	$4,940	n.a.	n.a.
8 years[50]	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	$2,432	$4,792

Family Child Care Homes (1998)

	Statewide		Minnehaha		Brookings	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,510	n.a.	$3,770	n.a.	$3,120	$3,900
4 years	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	$3,120	$3,900
8 years	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	$2,432	$4,792

Many Children in South Dakota Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does South Dakota require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[51]	No
Does South Dakota require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[52]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in South Dakota in 1996[53]	$11,720
Percentage of child care centers in South Dakota that were accredited as of 1997[54]	2%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in South Dakota[55]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[56]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	5	3-4	No
18 months	5	3-5	Yes
27 months	5	4-6	Yes
3 years	10	7-10	Yes
4 years	10	8-10	Yes

Other Child Care Indicators in South Dakota

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[57]	143
Number of licensed group family child care homes in 1997[58]	61
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[59]	1,176
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[60]	5%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from the Family Resource Network in Brookings, SD; collected through a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[9] Information from the Family Resource Network in Brookings, SD; collected through a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[10] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[11] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[15] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[16] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[17] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[18] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[19] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[20] A family child care home caring for fewer than twelve children is required to be registered if it is receiving compensation from public funds.

[21] National Association for the Education of Young Children, *The Demand and Supply of Child Care in 1990, Joint Findings from the National Child Care Survey, 1990 and the Profile of Child Care Settings* (Washington, DC: NAEYC, 1991).

[22] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools (October 16, 1997).

[23] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[24] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[25] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[26] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[27] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[28] National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW).

[29] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[30] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[31] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[32]School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[33] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[34] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[35] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[36] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[37] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[38] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[39] Information from the Family Resource Network in Brookings, SD; collected through a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[40] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[41] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[42] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[43] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[44] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[45] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[46] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[47] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[48] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[49] Information from the Family Resource Network in Brookings, SD; collected through a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[50] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[51] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[52] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[53] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[54] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[55] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[56] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[57] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[58] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[59] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[60] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

WISCONSIN:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Wisconsin parents.

- Every day, about 245,000 children younger than six are in child care in Wisconsin, if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Wisconsin work to help support their families. An estimated 67 percent of Wisconsin mothers with children younger than six, and 81 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Wisconsin and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Wisconsin.

Child care is costly for many families in Wisconsin.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Wisconsin in 1997 was $2,747[6]—less than half the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Dane County, and about two-thirds the cost for that same child in Calumet County.
- Many families in Wisconsin earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Wisconsin with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 344,310 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[7]
- In Wisconsin, average child care costs for an infant or preschooler can easily equal $4,000 to $8,000 per year. Child care is expensive for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. For example, the average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Dane County in 1996 was $6,240, with fees as high as $9,100; and the average cost in Calumet County was $4,004, with fees as high as $4,836.[8] These expenses are for only one child—families with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Wisconsin[9]

Child Care Centers (1996)

	Dane County		Calumet County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$7,696	$9,360	$5,629	$6,500
4 years	$6,240	$9,100	$4,004	$4,836
8 years[10]	$4,373	$4,792	$2,731	n.a.

Family Child Care Homes (1996)

	Dane County		Adams County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$6,760	$15,600	$5,148	n.a.
4 years	$6,188	$15,600	$4,615	n.a.
8 years	$3,594	$5,990	$3,989	n.a.

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in Dane County, Wisconsin, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time just above the minimum wage (for example, earning $22,000 a year before taxes) would have to spend *63 percent* of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in Wisconsin are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Wisconsin now "guarantees" child care assistance to all families earning less than $21,996 (for a family of three), as long as funds are available. Providing this guarantee was an important step forward in helping families. However, families' access to quality care is still limited by a number of problems. These problems include the state's low income cutoff, inadequate efforts to ensure that families know about their child care options, high family fees, and financial incentives for low-income families to choose the most minimally regulated child care.

- Wisconsin ranks 31st among the states in making low-income working families eligible for child care assistance. The state only allows families with incomes below $21,996* (for a family of three) to be eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $36,149. *[Families already receiving assistance can continue doing so until their annual income reaches $26,532.][11] Wisconsin's income cutoff is lower than that in a number of other states, including neighboring Michigan and Minnesota.[12]

- Families trying to move from welfare to work need child care if they are to get and keep jobs. Yet there are indications that many Wisconsin families on welfare are not getting the child care assistance they need to help them enter the workforce. In a number of counties, very few of the participants in the state's welfare reform program ("W-2") are receiving child care assistance, according to the Wisconsin Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Network which helps families find care. For example, Grant County provides assistance to just *two* families. Because the program is new, families do not always know they are eligible for child care subsidies.[13]

- Wisconsin does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 33 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Wisconsin spent 64 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[14] Since 1994, the state has increased its funding for child care and early education, but further investments are needed to ensure that low-income families have access to quality child care.

Due to inadequate state policies, families in Wisconsin fortunate enough to receive child care assistance still face financial hardship and providers who serve these families are having a hard time making ends meet.

- Families receiving child care assistance in Wisconsin continue to shoulder a huge financial burden, as the state has some of the highest family copayment levels in the country. As of January 1998, a family of three earning only $19,995 a year (or only $1,670 a month) receiving child care help could still be required to pay as much as 12 percent of their income—or $195 a month—in family copayments. This is higher than recommended by experts, and is significantly more than families at the same income level would have to pay in many other states, including neighboring states such as Illinois, Michigan and Minnesota.[15]
- Many parents have difficulties meeting the high copayments they are required to pay, which, in turn, creates serious problems for the child care providers. For example:
  - ⇒ The Sheboygan Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) surveyed child care centers at the end of 1997 and found that 70 to 80 percent of them had unpaid copayments, because parents couldn't afford the costs. Some parents owed as much as $2,000.
  - ⇒ In Appleton, the CCR&R received calls from four centers in one week that were on the verge of collapse because parents in W-2 could not make their copayments. One center is $17,000 in debt because parents making $7 to $8 per hour cannot afford the required copayments. Another center in the Appleton area has 42 low-income parents whose copayments are behind. Yet another center, which has far more resources than most since it is employer-sponsored, is struggling because of the high percentage (65 percent) of families that are using the center on a part-time basis, due in part to the high cost of care.[16]
- Wisconsin providers not only have to deal with delays in parent payments, but also with delayed payments from the state and the county. At the time of a February 1998 newspaper report, Milwaukee County had not paid some providers for months—causing serious financial hardship—and the state did not have an appeal process that would have allowed child care providers to petition for fair hearings on payment disputes.[17]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Wisconsin are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Wisconsin affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[18] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[19] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[20]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Wisconsin.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Wisconsin's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Wisconsin—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Wisconsin's children from harm.

- Wisconsin is one of the many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, for example, the state allowed a caregiver in a center to care for as many as 13 four-year-olds alone, although early childhood experts recommend no more than eight to 10. This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.[21]

- Chronic and persistent licensing violations are found in Madison child care programs, reports the City of Madison Community Services agency. Nearly one-quarter of the full-day programs in Madison were recently found to have large numbers of violations of the state licensing code (more than 100 violations during the last four years). This was a chronic problem, with a number of programs failing to meet health and safety standards throughout a significant portion of the time period considered.[22]

Low wages and poor benefits, high turnover rates, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[23] Wisconsin has created a new category which allows family child care providers to care for up to six children (including their own) without any training.[24] This category, called "provisional certification," was part of the state's welfare reform initiative, W-2.[25]

- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[26] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Wisconsin was only $13,740.[27] Even directors of licensed child care centers in Dane County only earned an average of about $24,000 per year.[28]

- Family child care providers in Wisconsin make poverty-level wages. In 1994, licensed family child care providers reported netting just $8,344 annually, and certified family child care providers (who are subject to fewer training and other requirements) earned $5,132 after expenses. Yet Wisconsin family child care providers work hard for this minimal pay—operating full-time, year-round businesses, and working an average of 60 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.[29]

- Wisconsin child care teaching staff experienced a wage increase of just over 1 percent per year between 1988 and 1994. And their real income—after accounting for inflation—actually *declined* over the fourteen-year period between 1980 and 1994.[30]

- As of 1994, the average public school teacher in Wisconsin earned nearly three times as much as a Wisconsin child care teacher with comparable training (a BA degree, plus specialized training in early childhood education).[31]

- Child care teaching staff in Wisconsin are highly educated when compared to the Wisconsin general population, as well as to child care teachers throughout the United States, but are not rewarded for their educational attainment. One teacher, who had recently received a degree, reported that while her job opportunities had improved because of her degree, the "15 cents extra per hour I receive at my center because I am degreed belittles that accomplishment."[32]

Wisconsin child care teachers express frustration with their low wages:[33]

"I earned three 40-hour certificates plus other classes and I'm still at the same wage, $5 per hour. I am really sick of it. My son who is 17 makes more than I do. It doesn't make you feel good about yourself."

"I could earn more checking groceries. It's very frustrating. I graduated with the highest honors and after four years of hard work, I earn $6 per hour, and work year-round."

"As much as I love caring for children, financially it is getting more and more difficult to keep this job."

"It's improved, but I still couldn't make it on my own at this pay rate. It's too bad that people who do less than us get paid more; if things keep going like this, I will have to quit this job to get a better-paying job, even though I really love what I'm doing."

"The cost of living has made it necessary for me to take another job to support my child at home. I am constantly aware of my need to leave the field to improve my quality of life. I am a great teacher but may need to leave teaching to survive."

- Child care providers not only lack adequate wages, but benefits as well. The overwhelming majority of Wisconsin child care centers provide their teaching staff no or limited health insurance. In 1994, only 10 percent of centers offered all of their teaching staff full-paid health insurance. Over half of all centers offered no health insurance to any teaching staff.[34]

- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in Wisconsin. For example, in 1997, the turnover rate in licensed child care centers in Dane County was 28 percent.[35] Turnover rates for family child care homes are high as well, with one out of every five going out of business each year in the state as a whole, and as many as one out of four in Madison and the surrounding counties (Dane, Columbia, Dodge, Jefferson, and Sauk).[36] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[37]

- The turnover rates for child care providers would be much lower if they received adequate salaries. In 1994, 67 percent of the Wisconsin family child care providers surveyed reported that they would be more likely to stay in the field if they had higher earnings and better access to benefits.[38]

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Staffing shortages are reaching a crisis point in many Wisconsin child care programs

City-certified centers in two public gatherings recently had consensus on the fact that staffing was at a crisis point. Five centers had open positions for more than six months. They could not fill them with qualified individuals. Three centers all lowered their qualifications and increased the pay and were still having difficulty.

Two after-school programs this year limited enrollment because they could not fill positions. The Glendale (WI) Safe Haven program has almost all part-time, part-week staff, which is a quality problem in a program where at-risk kids need to bond with a consistent caregiver.

Reported by The City of Madison Community Services Agency[39]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Wisconsin.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in Wisconsin. In 1997, only about 159 of Wisconsin's 2,229 licensed child care centers (or 7 percent) were accredited.[40] Accredited programs were difficult to find, even in the larger cities. For instance, as of October 1997, just 48 of Milwaukee's 630 licensed operating child care centers had NAEYC accreditation.[41]

Centers lack the resources they need to provide quality care

In Madison, three centers face such cost constraints that they have had to cut the budget for basic equipment and supplies. Staff carefully ration the supplies they have—providing, for instance, just one sheet of paper per child, one quarter cup of playdough, etc. When the centers run out of these items, the activities are curtailed, report City certification staff.[42]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Wisconsin face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Wisconsin school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Wisconsin families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 140,613 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Wisconsin live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[43]

- Wisconsin children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[44] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[45] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[46] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.

- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Wisconsin, only one in five public schools (2,014 or 19 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[47]

- In Wisconsin, an inability to find staff for after-school programs means that there are not enough programs available, and that programs are having to limit the number of children they serve. For example, the City of Madison's Community Services Agency reports that two after-school programs in Madison have had to limit enrollment because they cannot find staff to fill positions.[48]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Wisconsin.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[49] This means as many as 29,600 babies in Wisconsin are in child care, if national patterns hold true.[50]

- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Wisconsin's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.

- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, even though a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping babies grow, Wisconsin is one of only 13 states that meet recommended levels for the number of babies or toddlers a single caregiver is allowed to care for.[51]

- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Wisconsin to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Dane County in 1996 averaged $7,696 annually, but could cost as much as $9,360.[52]

- There is an acute shortage of infant care in all counties in the state, reports the Wisconsin Child Care Resource and Referral Network. For instance, in Milwaukee and neighboring counties, less than half of all centers (41 percent) and family child care providers (44 percent) will serve children under age two. In comparison, 54 percent of calls to the child care resource and referral agency serving this area are from parents looking for child care for infants and toddlers.[53]

The shortage of quality, affordable child care will be a growing problem as more families move from welfare to work.

- Families required to go to work under Wisconsin's W-2 welfare program will need child care. However, in some areas in the state, the current supply of child care is barely sufficient to meet existing needs, and may be unable to accommodate an increased demand. A pre-W-2 survey estimated that almost 8,000 slots would be needed for W-2 participants in Milwaukee alone. Yet Milwaukee's central city centers were already reporting near full enrollment.[54]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Wisconsin

Number of children younger than one[55]	65,820
Number of children younger than six[56]	408,410
Number of children ages six to 17[57]	934,624
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[58]	29,600
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[59]	245,000
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[60]	67%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[61]	81%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Wisconsin

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[62]	344,310
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Wisconsin[63]	$2,747

Annual Child Care Costs in Wisconsin[64]

Child Care Centers (1996)

	Dane County		Calumet County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$7,696	$9,360	$5,629	$6,500
4 years	$6,240	$9,100	$4,004	$4,836
8 years[65]	$4,373	$4,792	$2,731	n.a.

Family Child Care Homes (1996)

	Dane County		Adams County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$6,760	$15,600	$5,148	n.a.
4 years	$6,188	$15,600	$4,615	n.a.
8 years	$3,594	$5,990	$3,989	n.a.

Many Children in Wisconsin Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Wisconsin require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[66]		Yes
Does Wisconsin require any training for licensed family child care providers prior to serving children?[67]		Yes
Average salary for a child care worker in Wisconsin in 1996[68]		$13,740
Annual turnover rates for child care workers in Wisconsin:	family child care homes (statewide)[69]	21%
	licensed child care centers (Dane County)[70]	28%
Percentage of child care centers in Wisconsin that were accredited as of 1997[71]		7%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Wisconsin[72]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[73]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	4	3-5	Yes
27 months	6	4-6	Yes
3 years	10	7-10	Yes
4 years	13	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in Wisconsin

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[74]	2,229
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[75]	7,516
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[76]	19%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995*. Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from Wisconsin CCR&R Network, Appleton, WI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[9] Information from Wisconsin CCR&R Network, Appleton, WI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[10] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[11] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] Information from Wisconsin CCR&R Network, Appleton, WI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[14] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education*. (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[15] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[16] Information from Wisconsin CCR&R Network, Appleton, WI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[17] Huston, "W-2 Work or Else..." Milwaukee, WI: *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, February 4, 1998, p. 1.

[18] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[19] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[20] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[21] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[22] Information from Wisconsin CCR&R Network, Appleton, WI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[23] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools.

(October 16, 1997).

[24] Imrie, "When mothers go to work, can they trust the caregiver?" Washington, DC: *The Associated Press*, August 11, 1997.

[25] Information from Diane Adams, Wisconsin Child Care Resource and Referral Network, May 1998.

[26] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[27] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[28] Community Coordinated Child Care (4-C), *Child Care in Dane County 1997* (Appleton, WI: Community Coordinated Child Care, 1997).

[29] Burton, Sakai and Whitebook, "Valuable Work, Minimal Rewards," *A Report on the Wisconsin Child Care Work Force, 1994* (Wisconsin: National Center for the Early Childhood Work Force, Wisconsin Early Childhood Association, 1994) p. iii.

[30] Burton, Sakai and Whitebook, "Valuable Work, Minimal Rewards," *A Report on the Wisconsin Child Care Work Force, 1994* (Wisconsin: National Center for the Early Childhood Work Force, Wisconsin Early Childhood Association, 1994) p. i.

[31] Burton, Sakai and Whitebook, "Valuable Work, Minimal Rewards," *A Report on the Wisconsin Child Care Work Force, 1994* (Wisconsin: National Center for the Early Childhood Work Force, Wisconsin Early Childhood Association, 1994) p. 56.

[32] Burton, Sakai and Whitebook, "Valuable Work, Minimal Rewards," *A Report on the Wisconsin Child Care Work Force, 1994* (Wisconsin: National Center for the Early Childhood Work Force, Wisconsin Early Childhood Association, 1994) p. 35.

[33] Burton, Sakai and Whitebook, "Valuable Work, Minimal Rewards," *A Report on the Wisconsin Child Care Work Force, 1994* (Wisconsin: National Center for the Early Childhood Work Force, Wisconsin Early Childhood Association, 1994) p. 35.

[34] Burton, Sakai and Whitebook, "Valuable Work, Minimal Rewards," *A Report on the Wisconsin Child Care Work Force, 1994* (Wisconsin: National Center for the Early Childhood Work Force, Wisconsin Early Childhood Association, 1994) p. ii.

[35] Community Coordinated Child Care (4-C), *Child Care in Dane County 1997* (Appleton, WI: Community Coordinated Child Care, 1997).

[36] Information from Wisconsin CCR&R Network, Appleton, WI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[37] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[38] Burton, Sakai and Whitebook, "Valuable Work, Minimal Rewards," *A Report on the Wisconsin Child Care Work Force, 1994* (Wisconsin: National Center for the Early Childhood Work Force, Wisconsin Early Childhood Association, 1994) p. iv.

[39] Information from Wisconsin CCR&R Network, Appleton, WI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[40] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[41] Information from Wisconsin CCR&R Network, Appleton, WI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[42] Information from Wisconsin CCR&R Network, Appleton, WI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[43] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[44]School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[45] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[46] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[47] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[48] Information from Wisconsin CCR&R Network, Appleton, WI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[49] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[50] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[51] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[52] Information from Wisconsin CCR&R Network, Appleton, WI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[53] Information from Wisconsin CCR&R Network, Appleton, WI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[54] Information from Wisconsin CCR&R Network, Appleton, WI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[55] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[56] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[57] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[58] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[59] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[60] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[61] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[62] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995*. Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[63] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[64] Information from Wisconsin CCR&R Network, Appleton, WI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[65] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[66] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[67] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[68] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[69] Information from Wisconsin CCR&R Network, Appleton, WI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[70] Community Coordinated Child Care (4-C), *Child Care in Dane County 1997* (Appleton, WI: Community Coordinated Child Care, 1997).

[71] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[72] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[73] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[74] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[75] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[76] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

About the Children's Defense Fund

The Children's Defense Fund (CDF) exists to provide a strong and effective voice for all the children of America, who cannot vote, lobby, or speak for themselves. We pay particular attention to the needs of poor and minority children and those with disabilities. Our goal is to educate the nation about the needs of children and encourage preventive investment in children before they get sick, drop out of school, suffer family breakdown, or get into trouble.

CDF is a unique organization. CDF focuses on programs and policies that affect large numbers of children, rather than on helping families on a case-by-case basis. Our staff includes specialists in health, education, child welfare, mental health, child development, family income, and youth employment. CDF gathers data and disseminates information on key issues affecting children. We monitor the development and implementation of federal and state policies. We provide information, technical assistance, and support to a network of state and local child advocates, service providers, and public and private sector officials and leaders. We pursue an annual legislative agenda in the U.S. Congress and in states where we have offices. CDF educates hundreds of thousands of citizens annually about children's needs and responsible options for meeting those needs.

CDF is a national organization with roots in communities across America. Although our main office is in Washington, D.C., we reach out to towns and cities across the country to monitor the effects of changes in national and state policies and to help people and organizations concerned with what happens to children. CDF maintains state offices in Minnesota and Ohio, and local project offices in Marlboro County (South Carolina), Columbus, Greater Cincinnati, and New York City. CDF has developed cooperative projects with groups in many states.

The Black Community Crusade for Children (BCCC), developed by Black leaders and coordinated by CDF, is an initiative to mobilize the African American community behind a targeted effort to address the special problems facing Black children. The BCCC is part of CDF's overall work to ensure that *no* child is left behind and that *all* American children have a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, a Safe Start, and a Moral Start in life.

CDF is a private, nonprofit organization supported by foundations, corporate grants, and individual donations.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Children's Defense Fund

25 Years

LEAVE NO CHILD BEHIND.

25 E Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
www.childrensdefense.org

THE NORTHEAST:

Child Care Challenges

- Connecticut
- Maine
- Massachusetts
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- New York
- Pennsylvania
- Rhode Island
- Vermont

Gina Adams and Karen Schulman

Children's Defense Fund

May 1998

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Overview

This report is a regional compilation of several state reports, each of which examines the range of child care challenges facing families in the state. As shown in this volume, as well as the volumes for the other three regions of the U.S., families in *every state* are struggling to find quality child care they can afford—yet face serious problems because costs are too high, they cannot find the quality they are looking for, or the demands of their work schedules limit their choices. There is no state in the country that has successfully addressed the full range of problems facing families who need child care.

The problems described in this series highlight the need for a significant new commitment to child care. Increased state and federal investments, and greater involvement from other sectors, are essential to make improvements possible. We cannot continue to jeopardize the success of working families and their children. Because of the urgency of these problems, the Children's Defense Fund and thousands of national, state, and local organizations and individuals are working together to improve the quality and affordability of child care and after-school activities for America's children and families. To learn more about these efforts, call (202) 662-3671 or visit CDF's website at www.childrensdefense.org.

While this series focuses on the child care problems facing families across the country, there are positive steps that states and communities are taking to address these issues. Many of these initiatives are described in other CDF child care publications, such as *State Developments in Child Care and Early Education, 1997*. Yet despite these efforts, very serious challenges remain in every state, and much more must be done to help parents get the quality, affordable care they need to support their families.

Acknowledgments

We are grateful to the many individuals and organizations who helped on this project. They include the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA), who worked with us to survey selected state CCR&R agencies for information on child care costs, as well as on other issues. Our thanks go to key NACCRRA members and staff—including Diane Adams, Fran Kipnis, Kirsta Millar, Yasmina Vinci, Bobbie Weber, and Gail Wilson—as well as the many state and local child care resource and referral agency staff who took the time to answer the survey and verify the information. We are also grateful to state child care advocates across the country who helped to document the child care needs in their communities and provided input on drafts.

Other individuals and organizations provided invaluable assistance. These include Marcie Whitebook and Marci Andrews of the Center for the Child Care Workforce; Andrea Camp and staff of the Lifetime Television's child care initiative "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment", and Beth Miller, Linda Sisson, and Barbara Taylor representing the school-age child care community.

Many CDF staff members and interns helped us with this project as well. They include Neelum Arya, Helen Blank, Anourack Chinyavong, Danielle Contreras, Diane Minor, Nicole Oxendine Poersch, Elizabeth Reynolds, Daniel Stein, and Kanya Williams. We would like to extend our particular appreciation to Jody Wright, whose work was essential to this project.

Finally, we also would like to thank the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the A.L. Mailman Foundation, and the Prudential Foundation, who provided support for this effort.

Copyright © 1998 Children's Defense Fund

CDF grants blanket permission to copy any portion of this document, waiving all other applicable copyright protection, if it is to be used in work for and on behalf of children. For all other uses, please contact the Managing Editor, CDF Publications, for permission to reprint.

THE NORTHEAST:

Child Care Challenges

- Connecticut
- Maine
- Massachusetts
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- New York
- Pennsylvania
- Rhode Island
- Vermont

Gina Adams and Karen Schulman

Children's Defense Fund
May 1998

CONNECTICUT:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Connecticut parents.

- Every day, about 162,200 children younger than six are in child care in Connecticut if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Connecticut work to help support their families. An estimated 59 percent of Connecticut mothers with children younger than six, and 79 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Connecticut and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Connecticut.

Child care is costly for many families in Connecticut.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Connecticut in 1997 was $4,105 [6]—less than two-thirds the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center.
- Many families in Connecticut earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Connecticut with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 195,270 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below about $27,000 for a family of three or 200 percent of poverty).[7]
- In Connecticut, child care for one four-year-old in a child care center cost $6,487 on average in 1997, with fees as high as $15,600. Child care is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. The average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Hartford was $5,710, with fees as high as $8,580; and the average cost in Southbury was $7,010, with fees as high as $8,580.[8] These expenses are for only one child—parents with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Connecticut[9]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Hartford		Southbury	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$8,231	$15,600	$7,194	$10,140	$7,717	$8,580
4 years	$6,487	$15,600	$5,710	$8,580	$7,010	$8,580
8 years[10]	$4,504	$8,386	$4,493	$6,589	$4,792	$6,589

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Hartford		Southbury	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$8,231	$15,600	$5,258	$9,620	$7,878	$8,580
4 years	$6,407	$15,600	$4,825	$8,060	$7,696	$8,580
8 years	$4,193	$8,386	$4,229	$8,386	$4,564	$8,386

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child center at the average price in Connecticut, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *more than two-thirds* (69 percent) of their income for child care.

Child care costs are difficult for working parents in Connecticut

"I would like to see affordable, quality child care. I have an infant and a nine-year-old, and currently pay over $1,000/month in child care. This is 50 percent of my salary. There must be a better way for us to work and still feel safe about where our children are during the day without paying out half of our salary every month."[11]

Debbie, a 37-year-old mother from Manchester

Many low-income working families in Connecticut are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Connecticut is unable to serve all eligible families who apply for child care assistance. The state has frozen intake for all low-income working families other than those on welfare or teen parents attending high school.[12]
- In the next two years, 27,000 more children in the state of Connecticut will need child care due to welfare reform, according to the Connecticut Commission on Children.[13] Child care for each of these children costs 50 to 70 percent more than the amount provided for welfare for each child, according to a Connecticut child care administrator. The state projects that, without additional funds, it will not be able to meet the demand for child care assistance generated by the increase in welfare work requirements.[14]
- Connecticut does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 48 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Connecticut spent 26 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[15] Since 1994, the state has increased its investment in child

care and early childhood education through measures such as the School Readiness Initiative.[16] The long-range goal of the initiative is to develop statewide preschool access to unserved children. To meet this goal, however, the state will need to continue to expand its investment in child care and early education.

Low-income families in Connecticut are struggling to afford care

A widowed mother of two contacted the Child Care Infoline in Connecticut asking if they could help her find child care so she could return to school. She hoped to earn her vocational degree so she could get a better paying job. Unfortunately, in her search for affordable child care, she repeatedly ran into roadblocks. She had a very limited income, and both her children had special needs and large medical bills. Yet, the mother was not eligible for welfare because she had assets. She had tried enrolling the children in a state-funded program for child care but found a long waiting list. The remaining programs in her town were too expensive for her.[17]

Even those families in Connecticut that are fortunate enough to receive help paying for child care still face limited options due to low state payment rates for care.

- Families in Connecticut who receive child care assistance still face enormous difficulties finding providers who will take care of their children, as the amount the state will pay for care is significantly below market prices. As a consequence, providers either have to ask parents to make up the difference (beyond the parent fees required by the state), or refuse to take care of children with subsidies. As of January 1998, the amount the state paid for care was based on market prices in *1991-92*. In contrast, most other states paid rates based on more recent surveys of market prices.[18]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Connecticut are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Connecticut affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[19] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[20] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[21]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Connecticut.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Connecticut's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Connecticut—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced.

Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Connecticut's children from harm.

- Periodic inspections by licensing staff are one of the most important ways to ensure the safety and well-being of children in licensed child care programs, as the inspections allow licensers to detect and deter unsafe situations such as safety risks, unsanitary practices, too many children per adult, and so forth. Yet, child care centers in Connecticut are only required to receive spot-checks once every two years, and family child care homes once every three years.[22] Furthermore, these minimal requirements are rarely met due to inadequate investments in licensing staff. The state has only 25 inspectors to monitor the nearly 7,000 licensed child care centers and family homes that care for nearly 110,000 children under the age of 12.[23]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[24] Connecticut is one of the 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[25] Connecticut is also one of the 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior training.[26]
- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100).[27] In Connecticut, child care teachers earn only about $17,200 a year,[28] and national studies find that most child care providers receive no benefits or paid leave.[29]
- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Two out of five (40 percent) of Connecticut's family child care providers go out of business each year.[30] Similarly, some Connecticut day care centers report a 40 percent turnover rate in any given year.[31] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[32]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Connecticut.

- A 1995 study of center care in Connecticut found that the quality of care was inadequate, with three out of four centers offering care that was of mediocre quality or worse.[33] In these programs, children were unable to get the attention and stimulation they needed to develop to their maximum potential.
- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in Connecticut. As of April 1998, 268 of Connecticut's 1,575 licensed operating child care centers (or 17 percent) were accredited. In Hartford, one-third of the centers were accredited[34] and just one of Southbury's 10 licensed operating child care centers were accredited in 1997.[35] However, a number of additional centers throughout the state are in the process of accreditation.[36]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Connecticut face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Connecticut school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Connecticut families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 85,587 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Connecticut live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[37]
- Connecticut children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[38] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[39] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[40] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Connecticut, only three out of ten public schools (964 or 30 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[41]
- Care for school-age children is difficult to find throughout the state, according to the Child Care Infoline in Connecticut which helps families find child care. The lack of school-age care is a problem in cities and towns such as New Haven, Groton, New London, and Norwich. Furthermore, even when before- and after-school programs do exist, many families have difficulty using them because transportation to the programs is limited.[42]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Connecticut.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[43] This means as many as 19,800 babies in Connecticut are in child care if national patterns hold true.[44]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Connecticut's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Connecticut to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Connecticut in 1997 averaged $8,231, but could cost as much as $15,600.[45]
- The Child Care Infoline in Connecticut reports shortages of affordable care for infants and toddlers across the state. Care for very young children is particularly difficult to find in places such as Hartford, Middlesex County, and Litchfield County.[46]

Families have difficulty finding care for their very young preschoolers

A woman enrolled in a job training program called the Child Care Infoline in Connecticut to ask for help finding child care for her two-year-old son Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., while she attended job training. She requested referrals for centers with sliding fee scales in the towns of Farmington, East Hartford, Hartford, and Bloomfield. The counselor provided the requested information; however, the parent called back the same day requesting information on a fifth town, Windsor, for centers with similar services. She stated that the centers for which she had been given referrals were all full and had waiting lists.[47]

Other families in Connecticut face shortages of care as well—such as families who work during nontraditional hours.

- The Child Care Infoline in Connecticut, which helps parents find child care, reports that there is a shortage of providers offering care during nontraditional hours (such as evenings, early morning hours, or weekends). The greatest problems are found on the shoreline (New London/Middlesex County) and the greater Farmington Valley.[48] Such shortages make it difficult for parents with work schedules that are not "9-to-5" to find care.

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Connecticut

Number of children younger than one[49]	43,940
Number of children younger than six[50]	270,260
Number of children ages six to 17[51]	527,690
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[52]	19,800
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[53]	162,200
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[54]	59%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[55]	79%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Connecticut

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty) [56]	195,270
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Connecticut[57]	$4,105

Annual Child Care Costs in Connecticut[58]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Hartford		Southbury	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$8,231	$15,600	$7,194	$10,140	$7,717	$8,580
4 years	$6,487	$15,600	$5,710	$8,580	$7,010	$8,580
8 years[59]	$4,504	$8,386	$4,493	$6,589	$4,792	$6,589

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Hartford		Southbury	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$8,231	$15,600	$5,258	$9,620	$7,878	$8,580
4 years	$6,407	$15,600	$4,825	$8,060	$7,696	$8,580
8 years	$4,193	$8,386	$4,229	$8,386	$4,564	$8,386

Many Children in Connecticut Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Connecticut require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children? [60]	No
Does Connecticut require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children? [61]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in Connecticut in 1996 [62]	$17,200
Annual turnover rate for family child care providers in Connecticut [63]	40%
Percentage of child care centers in Connecticut that were accredited as of 1997 [64]	17%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed Per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Connecticut[65]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[66]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	4	3-5	Yes
27 months	4	4-6	Yes
3 years	10	7-10	Yes
4 years	10	8-10	Yes

Other Child Care Indicators in Connecticut

Number of licensed child care centers in 1998[67]	1,575
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1998[68]	85
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1998[69]	5,230
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[70]	30%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from Child Care Infoline, Rocky Hill, CT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[9] Information from Child Care Infoline, Rocky Hill, CT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[10] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[11] From Lifetime Television's online project "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment" which collects stories about child care from families around the country. It is found at www.lifetimetv.com.

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] McCarthy, "Changes in Welfare Push Demand for Child Care," *The New York Times*, January 25, 1998, Section 14CN, p. 1.

[14] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[15] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[16] Blank and Adams, *State Developments in Child Care and Early Education: 1997*, (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, December 1997), pp. 67-9.

[17] Information from Child Care Infoline, Rocky Hill, CT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[18] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[19] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[20] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[21] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[22] Information from Child Care Infoline, Rocky Hill, CT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[23] Matthew Daly, "Day Care, On Its Own," *The Hartford Courant*, April 14, 1998, pp. A1 and A9.

[24] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools. (October 16, 1997).

[25] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997). While Connecticut does not require family child care providers to receive any early childhood training, they are required to take a first aid course.

[26] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[27] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[28] Helburn, et al., *Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes in Child Care Centers, Technical Report*, (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[29] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[30] Information from Child Care Infoline, Rocky Hill, CT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[31] Campbell, "Day Care Now More Than Babysitting, A New Dawn," Hartford, CT: *The Hartford Courant*, December 5, 1997, p. E1.

[32] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[33] Helburn, et. al., *Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes Study: Public Report* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[34] Information on the number of accredited programs statewide and on the proportion of Hartford centers with accreditation from the Accreditation Facilitation Project, April 1998, and information on the number of licensed centers statewide from the CT Department of Public Health, March 1998.

[35] Data on number of accredited programs in Southbury from the Child Care Infoline, Rocky Hill, CT, collected through a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[36] Information from the Accreditation Facilitation Project, April 1998.

[37] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[38]School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[39] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[40] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[41] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[42] Information from Child Care Infoline, Rocky Hill, CT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[43] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[44] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[45] Information from Child Care Infoline, Rocky Hill, CT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[46] Information from Child Care Infoline, Rocky Hill, CT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[47] Information from Child Care Infoline, Rocky Hill, CT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[48] Information from Child Care Infoline, Rocky Hill, CT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[49] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[50] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[51] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[52] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[53] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[54] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[55] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[56] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[57] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[58] Information from Child Care Infoline, Rocky Hill, CT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[59] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[60] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[61] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[62] Helburn, et. al., *Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes in Child Care Centers, Technical Report*, (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[63] Information from Child Care Infoline, Rocky Hill, CT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[64] Information on the number of accredited programs statewide and on the proportion of Hartford centers with accreditation from the Accreditation Facilitation Project, April 1998, and information on the number of licensed centers statewide from the CT Department of Public Health, March 1998.

[65] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[66] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[67] Connecticut Department of Public Health, March 13, 1998.

[68] Connecticut Department of Public Health, March 13, 1998.

[69] Connecticut Department of Public Health, March 13, 1998.

[70] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

MAINE:

CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Maine parents.

- Every day, about 52,400 children younger than six are in child care in Maine if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Maine work to help support their families. An estimated 63 percent of Maine mothers with children younger than six, and 78 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Maine and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Maine.

Child care is costly for many families in Maine.

> *"I searched for three months to find an opening in a day care in my area for my son to attend. When I found one for him I found I ran into another problem of paying for it. I only bring home about $140 a week and have to pay day care $95 a week."*
>
> *Christi A., a Maine mother of three.*[6]

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Maine in 1997 was $3,639[7]—two-thirds the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Portland or Cumberland County.
- Many families in Maine earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Maine with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 88,320 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty or about $27,000 for a family of three).[8]

- In Maine, child care for an infant or preschooler can easily cost an average of $5,000 to $7,000 a year. Child care is costly for Maine families whether they live in urban or rural areas. The average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Portland in 1998 is $5,356 and the average annual cost in Gray is $5,200. In Cumberland County, care for a four-year-old in a center can cost as much as $7,800.[9] These expenses are for only one child—parents with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Maine[10]

Child Care Centers (1998)

	Cumberland County		Portland		Gray	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$6,448	$7,800	$6,916	$7,540	$5,720	$5,720
4 years	$5,356	$7,800	$5,356	$6,240	$5,200	$5,200
8 years[11]	$4,193	$5,990	$3,894	$4,792	$4,450	$4,621

Family Child Care Homes (1998)

	Cumberland County		Portland		Gray	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$5,460	$7,800	$5,772	$7,800	$4,888	$5,720
4 years	$4,888	$7,800	$5,148	$7,020	$4,576	$5,200
8 years	$4,289	$7,188	$4,325	$6,589	$3,738	$3,894

- While the Maine economy has improved and employment opportunities have increased, income has not risen dramatically for the typical family. As a result, child care remains unaffordable for many families.[12] To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in Portland, for example, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend 57 *percent* of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in Maine are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Many hard-working Maine families who are eligible for help in paying for child care are unable to get it due to inadequate funding. As of November 1996, an estimated 3,142 families were on waiting lists for contracted slots and 1,393 families were waiting for vouchers (the state estimated that these numbers had fallen only slightly by January 1998).[13] Research has shown that parents waiting for child care assistance are likely to face serious financial difficulties, have difficulty staying employed, go on welfare, and/or have serious concerns about their children's care because they cannot afford good quality child care.[14]
- Even in York County, which has the highest median income in the state and does better than most other Maine counties in providing child care subsidies, 318 children were on a waiting list for subsidized care vouchers and 108 were waiting for a contracted slot as of 1997.[15]
- Maine's waiting lists underestimate the number of families needing assistance. The state reports that some eligible families in Maine do not even know they can receive help paying for child care, and that the state would not be able to serve these additional families if they were aware they could get child care assistance.[16]

- A 1994 survey of welfare recipients in Maine found that 31 percent of those who left a previous job did so because of child care difficulties.[17] This evidence demonstrates how essential it is that parents trying to move from welfare to work have access to child care assistance if welfare reform is to be successful. Unfortunately, there are indications that such help may not be available in coming years. In a recent survey, Maine reported that, without additional funds, it is not confident that it will be able to meet the demand for child care assistance generated by the increase in welfare work requirements.[18]
- Maine does not invest enough in helping families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 29 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Maine spent 74 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[19]
- Local governments also need to invest more in assisting their families. For example, total county spending on child care in Cumberland County was only about $50,000 per year, less than one half of a percent of the county's $17 million budget.[20]
- While there is a perception that Maine benefited from additional federal child care funds in recent years, these increases were largely offset by significant cuts in the federal Title XX Social Services Block Grant (SSBG), which the state has historically used as a major source of support for child care.[21]

Even those Maine families that are fortunate enough to receive child care assistance face limited options due to inadequate state policies.

- Families in Maine who receive child care assistance still face enormous difficulties finding providers who will take care of their children, as the amount the state will pay for care is below market prices. As of January 1998, the amount that Maine paid for child care was based on the cost of care in *1993*. As a consequence, providers either have to ask parents to make up the difference (in addition to the parent fees required by the state), or refuse to take care of children receiving help from the state.[22]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Maine are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Maine affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[23] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[24] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[25]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are often inadequate.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Maine's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Maine—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Maine's children from harm.

- Far too many states do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, Maine was one of only nine states that met recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for all six age groups examined.[26]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. While hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[27] Maine is one of 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without any prior early childhood training.[28]
- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[29] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Maine was only $14,140.[30] National studies of child care providers find that they also tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[31]
- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers; nationwide, about one-third of child care teachers leave their centers each year.[32] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers are only 6.6 percent.[33]

Families in Maine struggle with the cost and quality of care

"The cost of child care is so high. Wages for providers are so low that the turnover rate is becoming a problem at my current daycare center. I struggle to juggle my family and my job. If child care was more accessible and affordable, it would make alot of lives a whole lot easier!"

Charlene T., a 31-year-old mother in York[34]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Maine.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in Maine. In 1997, only about 12 of Maine's 606 licensed child care centers (or 2 percent) were accredited.[35]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Maine face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Maine school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Maine families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 38,931 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Maine live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[36]
- Maine children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[37] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[38] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[39] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Maine, only about one in eight public schools (721 or 13 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[40]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Maine.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[41] This means as many as 6,100 babies in Maine are in child care if national patterns hold true.[42]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Maine's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping babies grow, Maine was one of only 13 states in 1997 that met recommended levels for the number of babies and toddlers a single caregiver was allowed to care for.[43]
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Maine to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Cumberland County averages $6,448 per year, but can cost as much as $7,800 per year.[44]

Other families in Maine face shortages of care as well—such as families where the parents have nonstandard work schedules.

- In many communities, parents who work hours other than the usual "9-to-5" may have difficulty finding care for their children. For instance, in York County, only seven of the 238 licensed and registered centers and homes provide evening care, only 14 offer care on Saturdays, and only five offer care on Sundays.[45]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Maine

Number of children younger than one[46]	13,561
Number of children younger than six[47]	87,357
Number of children ages six to 17[48]	212,162
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[49]	6,100
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[50]	52,400
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[51]	63%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[52]	78%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Maine

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty) [53]	88,320
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Maine[54]	$3,639

Annual Child Care Costs in Maine[55]

Child Care Centers (1998)

	Cumberland County		Portland		Gray	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$6,448	$7,800	$6,916	$7,540	$5,720	$5,720
4 years	$5,356	$7,800	$5,356	$6,240	$5,200	$5,200
8 years[56]	$4,193	$5,990	$3,894	$4,792	$4,450	$4,621

Family Child Care Homes (1998)

	Cumberland County		Portland		Gray	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$5,460	$7,800	$5,772	$7,800	$4,888	$5,720
4 years	$4,888	$7,800	$5,148	$7,020	$4,576	$5,200
8 years	$4,289	$7,188	$4,325	$6,589	$3,738	$3,894

Many Children in Maine Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Maine require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children? [57]	No
Does Maine require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children? [58]	Yes
Average salary for a child care worker in Maine in 1996[59]	$14,140
Percentage of child care centers in Maine that were accredited as of 1997[60]	2%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Maine[61]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[62]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	5	3-5	Yes
27 months	5	4-6	Yes
3 years	10	7-10	Yes
4 years	10	8-10	Yes

Other Child Care Indicators in Maine

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[63]	606
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[64]	2,365
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[65]	13%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, *Book of Families* (Washington, DC: 1998).

[7] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[8] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[9] Information from the Children's Center, Sanford, ME and Child Care Connections, Portland, ME; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[10] Information from the Children's Center, Sanford, ME and Child Care Connections, Portland, ME; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[11] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[12] Conversation with Bill Hager of The Alliance for Children's Care, Education and Supporting Services, Portland, ME, February 1998.

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, *Valuing Families: The High Cost of Waiting for Child Care Sliding Fee Assistance* (Minneapolis, MN: 1995).

[15] The Alliance for Children's Care, Education and Supporting Services, *1997 Maine Early Care and Education Community Needs Assessment* (Portland, ME: The Alliance for Children's Care, Education and Supporting Services, January 1998).

[16] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[17] Lazere, *Maine's Families: Poverty Despite Work* (Washington, DC: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 1996).

[18] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[19] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[20] Ragland, "Cuts Spark Debate Over County Role in Day Care," Portland, ME: *The Portland Press Herald,* December 4, 1997, p. 1B.

[21] Maine gained $3.1 million for CCDBG, but lost $2.7 million from SSBG. Conversation with Bill Hager of The Alliance for Children's Care, Education and Supporting Services, Portland, ME, February 1998.

[22] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[23] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[24] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[25] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[26] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[27] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools. (October 16, 1997).

[28] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[29] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[30] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[31] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[32] National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW).

[33] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[34] From Lifetime Television's online project "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment" which collects stories about child care from families around the country. It is found at www.lifetimetv.com.

[35] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[36] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[37] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[38] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[39] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[40] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[41] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[42] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[43] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[44] Information from the Children's Center, Sanford, ME and Child Care Connections, Portland, ME; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[45] The Alliance for Children's Care, Education and Supporting Services, *1997 Maine Early Care and Education Community Needs Assessment* (Portland, ME: The Alliance for Children's Care, Education and Supporting Services, January 1998).

[46] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[47] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[48] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[49] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[50] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[51] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[52] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[53] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[54] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[55] Information from the Children's Center, Sanford, ME and Child Care Connections, Portland, ME; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[56] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[57] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[58] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[59] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[60] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[61] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[62] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[63] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[64] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[65] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

MASSACHUSETTS:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Massachusetts parents.

- Every day, about 285,700 children younger than six are in child care in Massachusetts if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age. In Boston alone, over 25,000 children spend much of their day in child care facilities.[2]
- Most mothers in Massachusetts work to help support their families. An estimated 60 percent of Massachusetts mothers with children younger than six, and 78 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[3]
- For many mothers in Massachusetts and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[4] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[5] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[6]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Massachusetts.

Child care is costly for many families in Massachusetts.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Massachusetts in 1997 was $4,266[7]—three-fifths the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center.
- Many families in Massachusetts earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Massachusetts with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 327,060 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[8]
- In Massachusetts, child care for a four-year-old in a child care center cost an average of $7,119 in 1997, with fees as high as $16,120. Child care is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. For example, the average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center was $7,904 in Boston and $6,812 in Hampshire County.[9] These expenses are for only one child. Parents with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Massachusetts[10]

Child Care Centers (1997)

Age of child	Statewide		Boston		Hampshire County	
	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$9,854	$17,524	$12,324	$17,264	$8,164	$15,080
4 years	$7,119	$16,120	$7,904	n.a.	$6,812	$11,700
8 years[11]	$4,261	n.a.	$4,929	$6,846	$3,971	$11,357

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

Age of child	Statewide		Boston		Hampshire County	
	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$7,380	$21,060	$6,646	$14,040	$6,708	$10,400
4 years	$7,116	$17,524	$6,175	$14,040	$6,552	$10,400
8 years	$4,493	$9,584	$5,523	$9,584	$3,486	$4,792

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average cost in Massachusetts, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *79 percent* of their income for child care.
- Child care is also unaffordable for families at higher income levels in Massachusetts. In Massachusetts, a family earning the state median income (the income which is higher than that earned by half the families in the state) and paying for care for one infant and one school-age child would have to spend nearly one-quarter of their income on child care. In Boston, the average cost of care for an infant and school-age child would take up over one-third of the earnings of a family with the same income level.[12]

Many low-income working families in Massachusetts are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Massachusetts allows only low-income working families with incomes below $23,172* (for a family of three) to be eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $42,262. Massachusetts' income cutoff is lower than many other states in the northeast, including New York, New Jersey, Vermont, and Connecticut.[13] *[Families in Massachusetts already receiving assistance can continue doing so until their annual income reaches $33,252.]
- Even with the state's low income cutoffs, many families who are eligible for assistance are not getting assistance due to inadequate funds:
  - ⇒ In Massachusetts, 12,500 children—including 600 in the child protective services system—are on the waiting list for child care assistance. The waiting list actually underestimates the number of eligible families who are not being served, since the state reports that it is not confident that all these families know they could get help paying for child care.[14] Research has shown that parents waiting for child care assistance are likely to face serious financial difficulties, have difficulty staying employed, go on welfare, and/or have serious concerns about the quality of their children's care because they cannot afford good quality care.[15]
  - ⇒ There are approximately 113,140 children in the state of Massachusetts whose parents work full-time jobs and still make less than 50 percent of the state median income. All of these families qualify for child care under the income guidelines, but in State

Fiscal Year 1997, there were only enough funds to pay for care for 14,588 slots across the state.[16]

Families on Massachusetts' waiting list for child care assistance have to struggle to keep working and to stay off welfare

Some families end up losing their jobs...

The Child Care Resource Center in Cambridge reports that a woman called them looking for subsidized care for her two sets of twins, one set age three years and the other age three months. Her husband earned only $19,000 a year, and she was looking for child care assistance so she could get a job to supplement the limited family income. At the time, the state had released new funding for child care and she was told that she should find a job as soon as possible. Unfortunately, by the time she found a job all of the funds were committed to other families. She was put on a priority list, but in the meantime had to piece together informal care with friends and relatives in order to keep her job. By the time her name came up for subsidies, she had received a small raise and was no longer eligible. Because the stress of the informal arrangement was too great, she ultimately had to quit her job in order to care for her children.[17]

Other families end up returning to welfare...

Thrasher West lives with her two children, ages nine and three, in the Boston area. Thrasher worked in a sales position, where she earned approximately $200 a week, or $10,000 a year. She was unable to get help paying for care, so she had to pay child care costs for her daughter of $150 to $175 per week, leaving Thrasher with $25 to pay all her remaining expenses. She was forced to quit her job (she inquired about part-time work but was told there were no such opportunities) and went back to receiving welfare. Thrasher was very upset about returning to welfare, as she'd prided herself on finding a full-time job which had helped her become independent.[18]

And families who have never received welfare consider going on welfare to get child care assistance.

Because the state has given people leaving welfare priority for the subsidies, some working parents say they have been counseled by state workers to quit their jobs and go on welfare if they want to get child care assistance. "They told me if I went on welfare and then went right off, they could give me day care," said 21-year-old Ellen Lucas of Dorchester. "Because I chose not to go on welfare, I've been waiting six months."[19]

- As more families in Massachusetts are required to move from welfare to work, the number of families needing help with child care will increase. Approximately 40,000 former welfare recipients (with about 64,000 children) will be looking for work in Massachusetts starting in December 1998. Many of these families will need child care.[20] However, the state is unsure about whether it can meet this growing demand for child care assistance without additional funds.[21] As a result, low-income working families who are *not* on welfare may end up losing assistance as more families on welfare receive help.

- Massachusetts does not invest enough in helping families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only $1.18 out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Massachusetts spent 10 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[22]

Low-income working families who are unable to get child care assistance often have no choice but to place their children in less than optimal situations

Lynelle Lee of Dorchester makes two day care stops on her way to work each morning. Her first stop is at the Dorchester three-decker where her 17-month-old daughter, Lynelle, will spend the day. The baby sitter is a woman whose day care license was revoked by the state a year ago for inadequately supervising children near a hot iron, letting them watch talk shows, and other complaints. A family friend, she charges Lee a relatively inexpensive $100 a week. Lee then drops her four-year-old son, Kyle, off at the Sunnyside Day Nursery in Roxbury. It is a licensed day care center with trained teachers and airy classrooms. Kyle's care is subsidized; Lee pays $18 a week, and the state pays $133.50. Lee's dramatically different arrangements for her two youngest children are the unforeseen consequence of nearly a decade of state policy. While the state was quickly able to provide Lee with free, and then subsidized, day care for Kyle while she was on welfare, she has waited more than two years for subsidized care for Lynelle, who was born not while Lee was on welfare, but while she was working. She applied while pregnant with Lynelle.[23]

* * * * * * * *

Angela Pressey, 33, of Hyde Park, has been on the subsidized care waiting list for six months. Meanwhile, she relies for baby-sitting on a 51-year-old relative who suffered two strokes last year. She could not afford the $125 to $175 a week local day care centers were charging; she earns $8 an hour in the mailroom of a Boston law firm.[24]

Quoted/paraphrased from a Boston Globe article, April 28, 1998

Even those families fortunate enough to receive child care assistance in Massachusetts face limited choices due to low state reimbursement rates.

- Families in Massachusetts who receive child care assistance still face enormous difficulties finding providers who will take care of their children, as the amount the state will pay for care is below market prices. As of January 1998, the amount that Massachusetts paid for child care was significantly below even what care cost in *1994*. As a consequence, providers either have to ask parents to make up the difference (in addition to the parent fees required by the state), or refuse to take care of children with subsidies. In contrast, a number of other states paid at levels that would allow families receiving child care subsidies a broader range of choices than in Massachusetts.[25]
- As a result of Massachusetts' low rates, many providers refuse to care for children receiving help from the state. For instance, the Child Care Resource Center in Cambridge reports that, in a number of areas throughout the state, there is a shortage of family child care providers who are willing to accept children receiving child care subsidies.[26]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Massachusetts are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Massachusetts affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[27] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[28] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[29]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are often inadequate.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Massachusetts' children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Massachusetts—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Massachusetts' children from harm.
- Far too many states do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, Massachusetts was one of only nine states that met recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for all six age groups examined.[30]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they can obtain a license,[31] Massachusetts is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[32]
- As of 1995, less than half (40 percent) of the teachers and staff in Boston's family child care homes had had any training in early childhood education.[33] A survey of child care programs in Boston found that improving staff training was among the top priorities of directors of child care and school-age care programs as well as family child care providers.[34]
- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100).[35] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Massachusetts was only $16,540[36] and in 1994, the average pay for family home child care providers in Massachusetts was just $13,540.[37] In 1997, even the most experienced child care teachers had average salaries of only $25,860.[38] Furthermore, national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[39]
- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and

secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in Massachusetts. For instance, one study found turnover rates of 28 percent for child care teachers and 37 percent for child care assistants.[40] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[41]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Massachusetts.

- Many child care programs in Massachusetts are housed in facilities that are unsuitable for child care. A 1994 study of child care facilities in Boston found that the majority (about 60 percent) of child care and school-age programs were in facilities not originally designed for child care.[42] The inadequacy of child care facilities means that many have to close down periodically (for at least a few days) to make repairs, leaving parents scrambling to make alternate arrangements. In 1994, 20 percent of the centers in Boston reported having to close for more than three days due to facility problems, and 29 percent reported having to close down for a full- or part-day to make repairs.[43]
- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs. Yet such programs are scarce in Massachusetts. In 1997, only about 459 of Massachusetts' 2,169 licensed child care centers (or 21 percent) were accredited.[44] In Boston, only 15 percent of the city's centers, 5 percent of its school-age programs, and 5 percent of its family child care providers were accredited as of 1995.[45]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Massachusetts face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

Parents' need for quality, affordable child care outstrips supply

In Somerville, getting clients is not the problem for child care centers. In fact, at some child care centers, the waiting list is larger than the number of children served. Most have a waiting list of at least three months. The more popular centers—those that are less expensive or that will care for children after 5 p.m.—often have waiting lists for up to a year.[46]

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Massachusetts school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Massachusetts families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 172,257 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Massachusetts live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[47]
- Massachusetts children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[48] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[49] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[50] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.

- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Massachusetts, for example, only about one in four public schools (1,689 or 26 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[51]
- Further evidence of the shortage of school-age care is provided by the Child Care Resource Center in Cambridge, which helps families find care. The Center reports that parents with school-age children find it difficult to obtain child care throughout the state.[52]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Massachusetts.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[53] This means as many as 32,700 babies in Massachusetts are in child care if national patterns hold true.[54]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Massachusetts' young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping babies grow, Massachusetts was one of only 13 states that, in 1997, met recommended levels for the number of babies and toddlers a single caregiver was allowed to care for.[55]
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Massachusetts to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Massachusetts in 1997 averaged $9,854, but could cost as much as $17,524.[56]
- The Child Care Resource Center of Cambridge reports that parents across the state find it difficult to obtain infant and toddler care. Parents face very limited choices—for example, the vacancy rate for child care slots for infants was only 3 percent last year. The supply of infant/toddler care has not expanded to meet the growing demand due to high start-up and operating costs.[57]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Massachusetts

Number of children younger than one[58]	72,737
Number of children younger than six[59]	476,241
Number of children ages six to 17[60]	945,688

If national trends hold true, estimated number of:

children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[61]	32,700
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[62]	285,700

Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[63]	60%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[64]	78%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Massachusetts

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty) [65]	327,060
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Massachusetts[66]	$4,266

Annual Child Care Costs in Massachusetts[67]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Boston		Hampshire County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$9,854	$17,524	$12,324	$17,264	$8,164	$15,080
4 years	$7,119	$16,120	$7,904	n.a.	$6,812	$11,700
8 years[68]	$4,261	n.a.	$4,929	$6,846	$3,971	$11,357

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Boston		Hampshire County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$7,380	$21,060	$6,646	$14,040	$6,708	$10,400
4 years	$7,116	$17,524	$6,175	$14,040	$6,552	$10,400
8 years	$4,493	$9,584	$5,523	$9,584	$3,486	$4,792

Many Children in Massachusetts Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Massachusetts require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children? [69]		Yes
Does Massachusetts require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children? [70]		No
Average salary for a child care worker in Massachusetts in 1996[71]		$16,540
Annual turnover rates in Massachusetts:[72]	child care teachers	28%
	child care assistants	37%
Percentage of child care centers in Massachusetts that were accredited as of 1997[73]		21%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Massachusetts[74]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[75]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	3	3-4	Yes
18 months	4	3-5	Yes
27 months	4	4-6	Yes
3 years	10	7-10	Yes
4 years	10	8-10	Yes

Other Child Care Indicators in Massachusetts

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[76]	2,169
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[77]	10,993
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[78]	26%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Boston EQUIP, *Boston Inventory, First Report* (Boston, MA: Boston EQUIP, Associated Day Care Services, November 1994).

[3] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[4] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[5] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[6] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[7] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[8] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995*. Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[9] Information from Child Care Resource Center, Cambridge, MA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[10] Information from Child Care Resource Center, Cambridge, MA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[11] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[12] Snyder, *The Need for Affordable Child Care for Low and Middle Income Families in Massachusetts* (Massachusetts: Parents United for Child Care, May 5, 1997) p. 1.

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[15] Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, *Valuing Families: The High Cost of Waiting for Child Care Sliding Fee Assistance* (Minneapolis, MN: 1995).

[16] Snyder, *The Need for Affordable Child Care for Low and Middle Income Families in Massachusetts* (Massachusetts: Parents United for Child Care, May 5, 1997) p. 1.

[17] Information from Child Care Resource Center, Cambridge, MA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[18] Snyder, *The Need for Affordable Child Care for Low and Middle Income Families in Massachusetts* (Massachusetts: Parents United for Child Care, May 5, 1997) p. 12.

[19] Wong, Doris Sue, "A day care dilemma; state subsidizes welfare families while low-income working ones wait," *The Boston Globe*, April 28, 1998

[20] Snyder, *The Need for Affordable Child Care for Low and Middle Income Families in Massachusetts* (Massachusetts: Parents United for Child Care, May 5, 1997) p. 1.

[21] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[22] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education*. (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[23] Wong, Doris Sue, "A day care dilemma; state subsidizes welfare families while low-income working ones wait," *The Boston Globe*, April 28, 1998

[24] Wong, Doris Sue, "A day care dilemma; state subsidizes welfare families while low-income working ones wait," *The Boston Globe*, April 28, 1998

[25] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[26] Information from Child Care Resource Center, Cambridge, MA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[27] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[28] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[29] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[30] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, MA.

[31] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools. (October 16, 1997).

[32] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[33] Boston EQUIP, *Boston Inventory, First Report* (Boston, MA: Boston EQUIP, Associated Day Care Services, November 1994).

[34] Boston EQUIP, *Boston Inventory, First Report* (Boston, MA: Boston EQUIP, Associated Day Care Services, November 1994).

[35] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[36] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers" which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[37] Boston EQUIP, *Boston Inventory, First Report* (Boston, MA: Boston EQUIP, Associated Day Care Services, November 1994). Annual wages calculated from hourly wage, assuming that family child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[38] *A Decade of Change in Center-Based Child Care*, Center for the Child Care Workforce, Washington, DC, as reported in *Current Data on Child Care Salaries and Benefits in the United States* (Washington, DC: Center for the Child Care Workforce, March 1998).

[39] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[40] *A Decade of Change in Center-Based Child Care*, Center for the Child Care Workforce, Washington, DC, as reported in Center for the Child Care Workforce, *Current Data on Child Care Salaries and Benefits in the United States* (Washington, DC: Center for the Child Care Workforce, March 1998).

[41] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[42] Boston EQUIP, *Boston Inventory, First Report* (Boston, MA: Boston EQUIP, Associated Day Care Services, November 1994).

[43] Boston EQUIP, *Boston Inventory, First Report* (Boston, MA: Boston EQUIP, Associated Day Care Services, November 1994).

[44] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[45] Boston EQUIP, *Boston Inventory, First Report* (Boston, MA: Boston EQUIP, Associated Day Care Services, November 1994).

[46] Powers, "A day-care dilemma," Somerville, MA: *The Somerville Journal*, July 17, 1997, p. 1A.

[47] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[48] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[49] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[50] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[51] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[52] Information from Child Care Resource Center, Cambridge, MA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[53] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[54] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[55] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[56] Information from Child Care Resource Center, Cambridge, MA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[57] Information from Child Care Resource Center, Cambridge, MA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[58] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[59] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[60] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[61] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[62] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[63] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[64] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[65] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[66] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[67] Information from Child Care Resource Center, Cambridge, MA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[68] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180

days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[69] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[70] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[71] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[72] *A Decade of Change in Center-Based Child Care*, Center for the Child Care Workforce, Washington, DC, as reported in Center for the Child Care Workforce, *Current Data on Child Care Salaries and Benefits in the United States* (Washington, DC: Center for the Child Care Workforce, March 1998).

[73] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[74] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, MA.

[75] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[76] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[77] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[78] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

NEW HAMPSHIRE:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many New Hampshire parents.

- Every day, about 55,200 children younger than six are in child care in New Hampshire if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in New Hampshire work to help support their families. An estimated 67 percent of New Hampshire mothers with children younger than six, and 83 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in New Hampshire and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in New Hampshire.

Child care is costly for many families in New Hampshire.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in New Hampshire in 1997 was $4,644[6]—three-quarters the average cost of care for a one-year-old in a center, and less than the average cost for a four-year-old.
- Many families in New Hampshire earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in New Hampshire with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 59,340 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[7]
- In New Hampshire, child care for one four-year-old in a child care center costs an average of $5,096 in 1998, with fees as high as $8,528. Child care is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. For example, the average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Nashua is $5,876, with fees as high as $7,384; and the average cost in Cheshire County is $5,044, with fees as high as $6,240.[8] These expenses are for only one child—families with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in New Hampshire[9]

Child Care Centers (1998)

	Statewide		Nashua		Cheshire County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$6,084	$10,400	$7,228	$8,580	$6,032	$6,240
4 years	$5,096	$8,528	$5,876	$7,384	$5,044	$6,240
8 years[10]	$2,995	n.a.	$3,834	$5,391	$3,295	$3,295

Family Child Care Homes (1998)

	Statewide		Nashua		Cheshire County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$5,304	$8,788	$5,876	$8,788	$3,796	$4,940
4 years	$5,044	$8,164	$5,460	$8,164	$4,056	$4,940
8 years	$3,678	$7,188	$3,953	$4,792	$2,791	$3,295

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in New Hampshire, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *52 percent* of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in New Hampshire are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- New Hampshire ranks among the bottom half of states in making low-income families eligible for child care assistance as of January 1998. The state only allows low-income working families earning less than $22,700 (for a family of three) to be eligible for any help in paying for child care, although federal law allows the state to serve families earning up to $38,900. This cutoff is lower than in a number of nearby states, including New York, Vermont, and Maine.[11]
- Even with New Hampshire's relatively low income cutoffs, the state is not confident that all eligible families know they can get child care assistance, or that it could serve all eligible families if they did know they could get child care help.[12]

Even those New Hampshire families fortunate enough to receive child care assistance face limited options due to inadequate state policies.

- Families in New Hampshire who receive child care assistance still face enormous difficulties finding providers who will take care of their children, as the amount the state will pay for care is below market prices. As of January 1998, the amount that New Hampshire paid for child care was based on the cost of care in *1994*. As a consequence, providers either have to ask parents to make up the difference between the amount the provider charges and the amount the state will pay (in addition to the parent fees required by the state), or refuse to take care of children receiving help from the state.[13]
- Despite regional differences in market prices for child care, the state uses a flat rate that does not reflect that care costs more in certain areas. The statewide rate, which is too low to cover the cost of care in communities throughout New Hampshire, is particularly a problem in the southern part of the state (near Boston) where the cost of living and cost of child care are

higher. As a result, families who live in southern New Hampshire and receive child care assistance face extremely limited options when choosing care.[14]

- New Hampshire does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 52 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, New Hampshire spent 77 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[15]

The cost of child care and the inadequacy of assistance are creating hardships for New Hampshire families

Pat, a 61-year-old grandmother in Plymouth, writes:

"I am a grandmother now, trying to help my daughter go to school and get off welfare. Child care is hard to find, expensive, and not fully reimbursed by the state. In order to make it work, I have to put out the money and get reimbursed by the state. My daughter could never afford to do that; the baby-sitter and now the day care center cannot afford to wait for the state, which delays up to three months paying for services.

I started out years ago as a nursery school/kindergarten teacher. Wages are still too low to keep professionals in the field, at least in the private sector and so we don't have enough quality alternatives.

My daughter wants to go to work but it is incredibly difficult.... We need to value our children and families. Working mothers are the rule rather than the exception. My daughter and her two young children live with me because they can't afford to live elsewhere. This is not a return to the happy extended family of the 19th century, whatever reality that had. This is too many people, stressed, living in one small space. There is happiness and love, but also guilt, anger, frustration, and not enough space or money to make things work. The children don't flourish in this much stress. Women and children of all ages need help!"[16]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in New Hampshire are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in New Hampshire affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[17] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[18] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[19]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in New Hampshire.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of New Hampshire's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, New Hampshire—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect New Hampshire's children from harm.

- New Hampshire is one of the many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, for example, the state allowed a caregiver in a center to care for as many as 12 four-year-olds alone, although early childhood experts recommend no more than eight to 10. This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.[20]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[21] New Hampshire is one of the 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[22]

- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[23] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in New Hampshire was only $13,940.[24] Furthermore, national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[25]

- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in New Hampshire. Almost a quarter (23 percent) of New Hampshire's family child care providers go out of business each year.[26] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[27]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in New Hampshire.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in New Hampshire. As of January 1998, only 28 of the 454 licensed operating child care centers (or 6 percent) listed with the state's Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Network were accredited. Only one of the 20 licensed centers listed with the CCR&R network in Cheshire County, and six of the 25 licensed centers in Nashua, were accredited.[28]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across New Hampshire face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

Many families in New Hampshire have trouble finding good child care in their communities.

- There is only one licensed child care slot for every three preschoolers with working parents in the state, according to the Child Care Resource and Referral Network of New Hampshire.[29] Even if only a proportion of working parents use care outside the home, the supply of child care is still not adequate to meet the needs of families searching for licensed care.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many New Hampshire school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many New Hampshire families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 20,706 school-age children (ages five to 17) in New Hampshire live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[30]
- New Hampshire children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[31] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[32] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[33] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In New Hampshire, only one out of seven public schools (445 or 14 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[34]
- New Hampshire's Child Care Resource and Referral Network estimates that there are only enough licensed school-age child care slots to accommodate one out of eight school-age children whose parents work.[35] Even if some children can go to a friend's or relative's home (where an adult is present) after school, there still are not enough school-age care options available for children who do not have that alternative.

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in New Hampshire.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[36] This means as many as 6,600 babies in New Hampshire are in child care if national patterns hold true.[37]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care New Hampshire's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.

- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping babies grow, in 1997 New Hampshire is one of only 13 states that met recommended levels for the number of babies and toddlers a single caregiver was allowed to care for.[38]
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in New Hampshire to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in New Hampshire in 1998 averages $6,084, but can cost as much as $10,400.[39]

Other families in New Hampshire face shortages of care as well—such as families with children who have special needs.

- The FamilyWorks Resource and Referral, which helps families find care around the state, reports that New Hampshire parents who have children with special needs face particular challenges in trying to find child care, and often are unable to find providers who can take care of their children.[40]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in New Hampshire

Number of children younger than one[41]	14,626
Number of children younger than six[42]	91,975
Number of children ages six to 17[43]	203,891
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[44]	6,600
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[45]	55,200
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[46]	67%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[47]	83%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in New Hampshire

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[48]	59,340
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in New Hampshire[49]	$4,644

Annual Child Care Costs in New Hampshire[50]

Child Care Centers (1998)

	Statewide		Nashua		Cheshire County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$6,084	$10,400	$7,228	$8,580	$6,032	$6,240
4 years	$5,096	$8,528	$5,876	$7,384	$5,044	$6,240
8 years[51]	$2,995	n.a.	$3,834	$5,391	$3,295	$3,295

Family Child Care Homes (1998)

	Statewide		Nashua		Cheshire County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$5,304	$8,788	$5,876	$8,788	$3,796	$4,940
4 years	$5,044	$8,164	$5,460	$8,164	$4,056	$4,940
8 years	$3,678	$7,188	$3,953	$4,792	$2,791	$3,295

Many Children in New Hampshire Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does New Hampshire require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[52]	Yes
Does New Hampshire require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[53]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in New Hampshire in 1996[54]	$13,940
Annual turnover rate for family child care providers in New Hampshire[55]	23%
Percentage of child care centers in New Hampshire that were accredited as of 1997[56]	6%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in New Hampshire[57]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[58]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	5	3-5	Yes
27 months	6	4-6	Yes
3 years	8	7-10	Yes
4 years	12	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in New Hampshire

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[59]	790
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[60]	124
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[61]	329
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[62]	14%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from FamilyWorks Child Care Resource and Referral Program, Nashua, NH; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[9] Information from FamilyWorks Child Care Resource and Referral Program, Nashua, NH; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[10] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[11] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Information from FamilyWorks Child Care Resource and Referral Program, Nashua, NH; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[15] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[16] From Lifetime Television's online project "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment" which collects stories about child care from families around the country. It is found at www.lifetimetv.com.

[17] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[18] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[19] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[20] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[21] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools.

(October 16, 1997).

[22] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[23] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[24] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[25] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[26] Information from FamilyWorks Child Care Resource and Referral Program, Nashua, NH; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[27] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[28] Information from FamilyWorks Child Care Resource and Referral Program, Nashua, NH; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[29] The CCR&R estimates that there are nearly 68,800 children ages five and under with working parents in New Hampshire, yet only about 23,000 licensed child care slots. Reported by FamilyWorks Child Care Resource and Referral in Nashua, NH to a joint survey conducted by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies in February 1998.

[30] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[31] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[32] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[33] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[34] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[35] The CCR&R network estimates that there are 79,700 children between the ages of six and 13 who have working parents. Yet there are only 10,000 licensed slots for before- and after-school care. Information from FamilyWorks Child Care Resource and Referral Program, Nashua, NH; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[36] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[37] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[38] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[39] Information from FamilyWorks Child Care Resource and Referral Program, Nashua, NH; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[40] Information from FamilyWorks Child Care Resource and Referral Program, Nashua, NH; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[41] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[42] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[43] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[44] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[45] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[46] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[47] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[48] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995*. Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[49] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[50] Information from FamilyWorks Child Care Resource and Referral Program, Nashua, NH; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[51] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[52] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[53] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[54] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[55] Information from FamilyWorks Child Care Resource and Referral Program, Nashua, NH; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[56] Information from FamilyWorks Child Care Resource and Referral Program, Nashua, NH; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[57] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[58] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[59] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[60] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[61] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[62] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

NEW JERSEY:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many New Jersey parents.

- Every day, about 415,800 children younger than six are in child care in New Jersey if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in New Jersey work to help support their families. An estimated 56 percent of New Jersey mothers with children younger than six, and 75 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in New Jersey and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in New Jersey.

Child care is costly for many families in New Jersey.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in New Jersey in 1997 was $4,269[6]—two-thirds the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center.
- Many families in New Jersey earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in New Jersey with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 416,070 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[7]
- In New Jersey, child care for one four-year-old in a child care center can easily cost an average of $4,000 to $6,000 annually. Child care is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. In 1997, for example, the average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Trenton was $4,628, with fees as high as $6,760; and the average cost in Somerset County was $7,176, with fees as high as $10,920.[8] These expenses are for only one child—families with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in New Jersey[9]

Child Care Centers (1997)

Age of child	Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth and Somerset Counties		Trenton		Somerset County	
	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$7,124	$13,520	$5,824	$8,840	$8,164	$13,520
4 years	$6,448	$10,920	$4,628	$6,760	$7,176	$10,920
8 years[10]	$5,631	$9,584	$4,450	$8,557	$4,792	$8,386

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

Age of child	Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth and Somerset Counties		Trenton		Somerset County	
	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$7,176	$14,040	$4,628	$8,320	$8,476	$14,040
4 years	$6,916	$14,040	$4,264	$8,320	$8,320	$14,040
8 years	$4,792	$8,386	$4,193	$8,386	$4,792	$8,386

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in New Jersey, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *63 percent* of their income for child care.

> **Child care is very costly for New Jersey families**
>
> *A mother in Williamstown earning $30,000 per year spends $780 per month—or 43 percent of her net income—on child care for her two children (ages 18 months and three-and-a-half). While it is difficult to manage the high cost of care, she believes that some families face even greater financial hardship. She writes: "My family and I are thankful for what we have. We see and hear of so many that are in worse condition than we are in the area of income and child care. I have a very strict budget that I maintain and cannot stray from or I will not be able to make ends meet. Food and car insurance is high along with my other expenses."*[11]

Many low-income working families in New Jersey are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- New Jersey allows only low-income working families with incomes below $26,660* (for a family of three) to be eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $43,846. New Jersey's income cutoff is lower than the cutoff in a number of other northeastern states, including Pennsylvania, Maine, and Connecticut.[12] *[Families in New Jersey already receiving assistance can continue doing so until their annual income reaches $33,325.]
- Many hard-working low-income families in New Jersey who *are* eligible and apply for child care assistance are unable to get help paying for care because the state lacks sufficient funds. In New Jersey, about 9,000 children were waiting for contracted spaces as of January 1, 1998 and about 6,500 for vouchers through the child care assistance program.[13] Research has shown that parents waiting for child care assistance are likely to face serious financial difficulties, have difficulty staying employed, go on welfare, and/or have serious concerns about the quality of their children's care because they cannot afford good quality care.[14]

New Jersey parents who cannot get child care assistance face difficult choices

Some struggle to afford basic living expenses...

A New Jersey parent on the waiting list for child care assistance shares her experience: "I am a full-time college student and a mother of a three-year-old daughter.... Currently I work two part-time jobs at my college to help cover my expenses. Each week I have to choose whether or not I should buy groceries, pay a utility bill or pay for my day care expenses.... My husband is a landscaper and does not always earn enough to cover our living expenses due to the seasonal nature of his work."[15]

...and some are forced to go on welfare so they can get help.

Because of inadequate funding for child care assistance, low-income working families who are __*not*__ *on welfare who need child care assistance are put on waiting lists for child care help. This creates a strange incentive for families to go on welfare in order to get help. Takiyah, a 21-year-old mother who lives in Camden, describes her frustration with this situation: "Why should I have to get on welfare just to get my daughter into a daycare. If you are trying to get everyone off of welfare, why did I have to drop out of my trade school? Just to get money from welfare so I can get my daughter into daycare...."*[16]

- New Jersey's waiting list is likely to underestimate the number of eligible families who need child care assistance. New Jersey is not confident that all eligible families know they could get help paying for child care,[17] and even those families who know they are eligible may not bother to sign up believing it would be futile to apply with such long waiting lists.
- The situation is likely to get worse in coming years, as more families are required to move from welfare to work. In a recent survey, New Jersey reported that, without additional funds, it is not confident that it will be able to meet the demand for child care assistance generated by the increase in welfare work requirements.[18] Low-income working families who are *not* on welfare may end up losing assistance as more families on welfare need help.
- New Jersey does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 50 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, New Jersey spent 32 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[19]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in New Jersey are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in New Jersey affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[20] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[21] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[22]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in New Jersey.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of New Jersey's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, New Jersey—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect New Jersey's children from harm.

- New Jersey is one of many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, the state met recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for only three of the six age groups examined.[23] For example, the state allows a caregiver in a center classroom to care for as many as 15 four-year-olds alone, although early childhood experts recommend no more than eight to 10. This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.

- Periodic inspections by licensing staff are one of the most important ways to ensure the safety and well-being of children in licensed child care programs, as the inspections allow licensers to detect unsafe situations such as safety risks, unsanitary practices, and too many children to supervise adequately. While New Jersey recently increased its monitoring of child care centers,[24] it still only inspects 20 percent of registered family child care homes each year.[25] As a result, family child care homes go for several years without anyone checking to make sure that children are safe.

- New Jersey relies on a voluntary registration approach that allows family child care providers to care for as many as five children in their home without having to meet *any* licensing health and safety protections.[26] This means that a provider with a history of child abuse could legally care for five children in his/her home, and that a program could legally operate with safety hazards such as uncovered electrical outlets or poisonous substances that are not locked away.

- Due to inadequate funding of licensing in New Jersey, there are many providers who want to be regulated yet are unable to get through the process. As of July 1997, there was a back-log of over 2,500 prospective family child care providers wishing to become registered waiting for the state licensing agency to approve their applications.[27]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[28] New Jersey is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[29]

- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100).[30] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in New Jersey was only $17,880[31] and national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[32]

- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in New Jersey—for example, three out of 10 family child care providers in Mercer County go out of business each year.[33] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[34]
- A New Jersey child care resource and referral agency reports that centers are struggling to maintain qualified child care staff. Directors often call the agency desperate to find good, trained, committed employees,[35] although the relatively low wages makes it difficult to attract and retain skilled staff.

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in New Jersey.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in New Jersey. In 1997, only about 137 of New Jersey's 3,048 licensed child care centers (4 percent) were accredited.[36] The scarcity of accredited centers affects families in communities throughout the state. For instance, in the four-county area of Mercer, Somerset, Middlesex, and Monmouth, there are just 31 accredited centers listed at the local resource and referral agency.[37]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across New Jersey face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many New Jersey school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many New Jersey families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 195,008 school-age children (ages five to 17) in New Jersey live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[38]
- New Jersey children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[39] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[40] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[41] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In New Jersey, less than one out of three public schools (2,195 or 30 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[42]
- Child Care Connection, an agency in Trenton which helps families locate child care, reports that parents looking for care for their school-age children have difficulty finding it in many

areas of the state. Before- and after-school care for kindergarten students is in particularly short supply. Working parents also have difficulty finding transportation to get their children to their before- and after-school activities.[43]

New Jersey parents are worried about school-age children having constructive activities after school

Joann, a 28-year-old mother living in Kendall Park, describes her concerns about school-age children: "Child care is very important in this country. If there were responsible people around for children after school I feel there would be less crime, drug abuse, and teen pregnancies. Some school districts offer after-school care for kids but only up until fifth grade. There are many kids who are 12 and no adults around after school to watch over them. They need to have a place to go where they are safe. That way they wouldn't be wandering around looking around for something to do."[44]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in New Jersey.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[45] This means as many as 49,800 babies in New Jersey are in child care if national patterns hold true.[46]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care New Jersey's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping very young children grow, New Jersey allows a single caregiver to care for seven 18-month-old toddlers. In comparison, early childhood educators recommend a single caregiver be responsible for no more than three to five toddlers.[47] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, diaper, play, and care for seven active 18-month-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency such as a fire.
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in New Jersey to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Somerset County in 1997 averaged $8,164, but could cost as much as $13,520.[48]
- There is a shortage of centers providing affordable care for infants and toddlers in New Jersey, according to Child Care Connection. Only about one in four licensed centers in the state are licensed to serve children younger than two and a half,[49] and many of these centers have waiting lists for infant care (especially those centers in areas with large corporate workforces).[50]

Other families in New Jersey face shortages of care as well—such as families with nontraditional work schedules.

- New Jersey parents who work hours other than the traditional "9-to-5" shift face particularly serious problems in trying to find state licensed or registered child care, according to Child Care Connection.
- Families in New Jersey have problems finding providers who will care for their children when they are sick or who will offer back-up care when the family's usual child care arrangement falls through.[51] Unfortunately, for many parents—particularly low-wage workers—taking a day off when their child is ill or when their child care arrangement falls through can jeopardize the job they need to support their families.

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in New Jersey

Number of children younger than one[52]	110,745
Number of children younger than six[53]	692,984
Number of children ages six to 17[54]	1,293,988
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[55]	49,800
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[56]	415,800
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[57]	56%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[58]	75%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in New Jersey

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[59]	416,070
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in New Jersey[60]	$4,269

Annual Child Care Costs in New Jersey[61]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth and Somerset Counties		Trenton		Somerset County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$7,124	$13,520	$5,824	$8,840	$8,164	$13,520
4 years	$6,448	$10,920	$4,628	$6,760	$7,176	$10,920
8 years[62]	$5,631	$9,584	$4,450	$8,557	$4,792	$8,386

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth and Somerset Counties		Trenton		Somerset County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$7,176	$14,040	$4,628	$8,320	$8,476	$14,040
4 years	$6,916	$14,040	$4,264	$8,320	$8,320	$14,040
8 years	$4,792	$8,386	$4,193	$8,386	$4,792	$8,386

Many Children in New Jersey Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does New Jersey require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[63]	Yes
Does New Jersey require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[64]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in New Jersey in 1996[65]	$17,880
Annual turnover rate for family child care providers in Mercer County, New Jersey[66]	30%
Percentage of child care centers in New Jersey that were accredited as of 1997[67]	4%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in New Jersey[68]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[69]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	7	3-5	No
27 months	7	4-6	No
3 years	10	7-10	Yes
4 years	15	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in New Jersey

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[70]	3,048
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[71]	4,419
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[72]	30%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from Child Care Connection, Trenton, NJ; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[9] Information from Child Care Connection, Trenton, NJ; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[10] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[11] National Association of Resource and Referral Agencies, *Book of Families* (Washington, DC: NACCRRA, February 1998). Information collected by the Southern Regional Child Care Resource Center in Sewell, NJ.

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, *Valuing Families: The High Cost of Waiting for Child Care Sliding Fee Assistance* (Minneapolis, MN: 1995).

[15] This quote was taken from a collection of parent surveys and interviews conducted by local resource and referral agencies and other organizations in 1995 and 1996. Cited in: Adams and Poersch, *Key Facts About Child Care and Early Education: A Briefing Book* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1997), p. I-1.

[16] From Lifetime Television's online project "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment" which collects stories about child care from families around the country. It is found at www.lifetimetv.com.

[17] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[18] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[19] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[20] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[21] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[22] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[23] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[24] O'Crowley, "Future Child-Care Monitors Go On A Practice Inspection," Bergen County, NJ: *The Record*, March 4, 1998, p. A02.

[25] Information from Child Care Connection, Trenton, NJ; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[26] Information from Child Care Connection, Trenton, NJ; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[27] NJ Department of Human Services, *Early Care and Education, Quick Facts*, July 1997.

[28] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools. (October 16, 1997).

[29] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[30] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[31] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[32] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[33] Information from Child Care Connection, Trenton, NJ; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[34] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[35] Information from Child Care Connection, Trenton, NJ; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[36] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[37] Information from Child Care Connection, Trenton, NJ; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[38] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[39] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[40] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[41] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[42] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[43] Information from Child Care Connection, Trenton, NJ; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[44] From Lifetime Television's online project "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment" which collects stories about child care from families around the country. It is found at www.lifetimetv.com.

[45] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[46] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[47] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[48] Information from Child Care Connection, Trenton, NJ; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[49] Only 835 centers are licensed to care for children younger than 30 months old, out of a total of 3,048 centers in the state. NJ Department of Human Services, *Early Care and Education, Quick Facts*, July 1997.

[50] Information from Child Care Connection, Trenton, NJ; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[51] Information from Child Care Connection, Trenton, NJ; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[52] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[53] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[54] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[55] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[56] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[57] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[58] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[59] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995*. Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[60] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[61] Information from Child Care Connection, Trenton, NJ; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[62] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[63] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[64] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[65] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[66] Information from Child Care Connection, Trenton, NJ; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[67] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-

tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the NJ Department of Human Services.

[68] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[69] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[70] Data from the NJ Department of Human Services.

[71] Data from the NJ Department of Human Services.

[72] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

NEW YORK:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many New York parents.

- Every day, about 960,900 children younger than six are in child care in New York if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in New York work to help support their families. An estimated 53 percent of New York mothers with children younger than six, and 72 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in New York and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in New York.

Child care is costly for many families in New York.

- Child care often costs more than a college education at a public university. For example, the average annual cost of public college tuition in New York in 1997 was $3,797[6]—about two-thirds the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center.
- Many families in New York earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in New York with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 1,529,000 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[7]
- In New York, child care for one four-year-old in a child care center cost an average of $5,612 in 1995, with fees as high as $8,580. Child care is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. For example, the average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Albany County was $6,708, and the average cost in Binghamton/Broome County was $5,148.[8] These expenses are for only one child—families with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in New York[9]

Child Care Centers (1995)

	Statewide		Albany County		Binghamton/ Broome County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$6,346	$9,360	$7,956	n.a.	$5,616	n.a.
4 years	$5,612	$8,580	$6,708	n.a.	$5,148	n.a.
8 years[10]	$3,378	$5,103	$4,660	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

Family Child Care Homes (1995)

	Statewide		Albany County		Binghamton/ Broome County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$5,020	$7,800	$5,980	n.a.	$4,680	n.a.
4 years	$4,718	$7,280	$5,200	n.a.	$4,420	n.a.
8 years	$3,378	$5,103	$3,450	n.a.	$3,127	n.a.

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in New York, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *56 percent* of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in New York are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- New York allows only low-income working families earning less than $26,964 (for a family of three) to be eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $36,179. New York's income cutoff is lower than that in a number of other states, including Pennsylvania.[11]
- Although New York's cutoff is not at the level allowed under federal law, the state does not have enough funds to serve all eligible families who apply for child care help and must place many of these families on waiting lists.[12] In New York City alone, there are about 28,000 low-income families waiting to receive subsidized child care, one-third of whom are welfare recipients.[13] Research has shown that parents waiting for child care assistance are likely to face serious financial difficulties, have difficulty staying employed, go on welfare, and/or to have serious concerns about their children's care because they cannot afford good quality child care.[14]
- New York's waiting lists for child care assistance may underestimate the number of eligible families who need help paying for care and are not receiving it. The state reports that there are some eligible families who do not apply for assistance because they do not even know it is available. If these additional families were to apply for help, the state is not confident that it could serve them, according to a recent survey.[15]
- New York does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 90 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, New York spent 16 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[16]

Parents need child care so they can work

A mother in Ferndale tells what child care assistance means to her family: "Without child care I would have to depend on welfare to provide for my family. My children have been at Twin Bridge day care for almost six years. I'm very thankful for day care. It's hard enough being a single parent but without day care it would be impossible."[17]

In the coming years, New York will face even greater challenges trying to provide child care assistance to all families who need it as welfare work requirements rise.

- Welfare reform efforts will significantly expand the need for child care for very young children (younger than age three). Under the new welfare rules, the parents of as many as 135,000 infants and toddlers in New York will no longer be exempt from the work requirements and will be subject to sanctions if they fail to find work. Even factoring in recent welfare caseload reductions, it was estimated that for families moving from welfare to work, the number of additional infants and toddlers needing child care would rise from more than 27,000 more infants and toddlers in FY 1997 (when work participation rates were 19.5 percent) to 67,500 more needing care by year 2002 (when participation rates will reach 50 percent). These figures are conservative estimates based on minimal participation rates—they do not reflect the goal of moving *all* recipients to work, which would mean providing care for significantly higher numbers of children.[18]
- In New York City alone, welfare reform could nearly double the demand for child care services, according the Office of the State Deputy Comptroller. While an additional 61,000 children may need care by the end of FY 1999 (assuming the state enforces the two-year work requirement and the City does not displace the working poor who are currently receiving subsidized child care), the City has provided funding for only an additional 27,500 children by FY 2001. Estimates are that an additional $135 to $225 million will be needed (beginning in FY 2000) to serve the remaining 33,500 children.[19]

The inadequate supply of child care for low-income families in New York City seriously undercuts the success of welfare reform and jeopardizes children's safety

A shortage of child care in New York City means that families trying to comply with welfare reform work requirements face a series of terrible dilemmas, as reported by the New York Times in April 1998.[20]

The city faces an acute shortage of child care for low-income families.

- *Estimates are that while almost 48,000 children of welfare mothers currently need child care in New York City, there is only room for about 19,000 of them in licensed child care.*
- *The shortage is particularly severe in areas where there are many families trying to move off welfare. The New York Human Services Administration estimates that more than two-thirds of the children needing child care in the Morrisania section of the Bronx (67 percent) and in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn (71 percent) lack child care options.*

As a result, mothers on welfare are unable to participate in welfare to work activities,...

- *The city has excused nearly 3,000 mothers from having to work because they are unable to find child care. However, these mothers are still subject to time limits for welfare, which means that they are losing valuable time needed to build their work skills and work experience.*

...caseworkers are illegally threatening to reduce the welfare checks of women who are unable to find care,...

- *Although it is against the law, caseworkers are threatening to reduce welfare benefits—a survey of 73 mothers on welfare by the Public Advocate found that 46 (almost two-thirds) had been told they were in jeopardy of losing their benefits. Many other mothers report similar experiences, and the New York Times reporter witnessed a caseworker telling a mother she would face sanctions if she could not find care.*
- *While the New York City Office of Employment Services (OES) requires caseworkers to offer each parent two child care opportunities (one of which has to be registered), a recent report by the Public Advocate found that OES does not give parents sufficient information to make informed decisions and instead steers parents into unregulated, unmonitored and decidedly less expensive informal care.*[21]

...and low-income mothers are facing the unacceptable choice of either using unsafe child care, or losing their basic financial support.

- *When her caseworker threatened to reduce her benefits, Wendy Virgos had to leave her 17-month-old daughter with a woman who kept her strapped in a dirty stroller all day to "protect" her from the older children.*
- *Digna Jimenez begged her caseworker to help her find child care because the only baby-sitter she knew had slapped her child. When the caseworker refused her plea, Digna was left without child care and lost $50 out of her $260 in cash benefits.*
- *Gloria Santiago's cash benefits were reduced because she refused to accept a slot in a program that would have required her three-year-old son to ride on the bus 45 minutes each way. "It's hard on me," she said, "but he is my only baby boy."*

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in New York are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in New York affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[22] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[23] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[24]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in New York.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of New York's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, New York—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect New York's children from harm.
- New York is one of the many states that do not adequately protect their children. For example, child care providers do not receive prompt background checks for a history of child abuse and neglect—as of January 1998, there was a six- to nine-month delay across the state for checks through the Child Abuse and Neglect Registry.[25]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[26] New York is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[27] It is also one of 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior training.[28]
- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—and barely make as much as bartenders ($14,450).[29] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in New York was only $14,400.[30] Furthermore, national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[31]
- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers; nationwide, about one-third of child care teachers leave their centers each year.[32] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers are only 6.6 percent.[33]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in New York.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in New York. In 1997, only about 248 of New York's 3,426 licensed child care centers (or 7 percent) were accredited.[34] Only 83 of the 17,715 state's licensed family and group child care homes had accreditation.[35]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across New York face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many New York school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many New York families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 780,756 school-age children (ages five to 17) in New York live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[36]

> *"My concern, now that I'm working, is how to pay for summer child care since I will not have enough money for food."*
>
> *A single mother of two school-age children,*
> *from Suffolk County, New York*[37]

- New York children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[38] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[39] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[40] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In New York, only one in four public schools (3,904 or 23 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[41]
- In many areas of New York, there are few options for school-age children, either in the public schools or in other locations. In 20 of state's 62 counties, there are three or fewer registered school-age programs and in four rural counties (Allegany, Hamilton, Washington, and Yates) there are no registered programs for school-age children at all.[42]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in New York.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by

Other Child Care Indicators in New York

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[44]	3,426
Number of licensed group child care homes in 1997[45]	2,537
Number of registered family child care homes in 1997[46]	15,178
Number of registered school-age care programs in 1997[47]	1,590
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[48]	23%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from New York State Child Care Coordinating Council, Albany, NY; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[9] Information from New York State Child Care Coordinating Council, Albany, NY; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[10] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[11] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] Swarns, "Mothers Poised for Workfare Face Acute Lack of Day Care," *New York Times,* April 14, 1998, p. A1 and p. A21.

[14] Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, *Valuing Families: The High Cost of Waiting for Child Care Sliding Fee Assistance* (Minneapolis, MN: 1995); and Phillips, *Child Care for Low-Income Families: A Summary of Two Workshops* (Washington, DC: Board on Children and Families, National Research Council, 1995).

[15] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[16] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[17] National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, *The Book of Families* (Washington, DC: National Association for Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998). Information collected by the local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency.

[18] New York State Child Care Coordinating Council, *New York State's Child Care Subsidy Gap*, (Albany, NY: New York State Child Care Coordinating Council, Greater Upstate Law Project, Inc., July 14, 1997), p. 6.

[19] McCall, State Comptroller, "Child Care Services in New York City," *Report 4-98* (New York, NY: Office of the State Deputy Comptroller, December 18, 1997,) pp. 1- 2.

[20] Swarns, "Mothers Poised for Workfare Face Acute Lack of Day Care," *New York Times,* April 14, 1998, p. A1 and p. A21.

someone other than their parents.[43] This means as many as 115,100 babies in New York are in child care if national patterns hold true.[44]

- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care New York's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. Although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping babies grow, in 1997 New York was one of only 13 states that met recommended levels for the number of babies and toddlers a single caregiver was allowed to care for.[45]
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in New York to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in New York in 1995 averaged $6,346, but could cost as much as $9,360.[46]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in New York

Number of children younger than one[47]	255,704
Number of children younger than six[48]	1,601,561
Number of children ages six to 17[49]	2,938,973
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[50]	115,100
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[51]	960,900
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[52]	53%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[53]	72%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in New York

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[54]	1,529,040
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in New York[55]	$3,797

Annual Child Care Costs in New York[56]

Child Care Centers (1995)

	Statewide		Albany County		Binghamton/Broome County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$6,346	$9,360	$7,956	n.a.	$5,616	n.a.
4 years	$5,612	$8,580	$6,708	n.a.	$5,148	n.a.
8 years[57]	$3,378	$5,103	$4,660	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

Family Child Care Homes (1995)

	Statewide		Albany County		Binghamton/Broome County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$5,020	$7,800	$5,980	n.a.	$4,680	n.a.
4 years	$4,718	$7,280	$5,200	n.a.	$4,420	n.a.
8 years	$3,378	$5,103	$3,450	n.a.	$3,127	n.a.

Many Children in New York Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does New York require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[58]	No
Does New York require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[59]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in New York in 1996[60]	$14,400
Percentage of child care centers in New York that were accredited as of 1997[61]	7%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in New York[62]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[63]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	5	3-5	Yes
27 months	5	4-6	Yes
3 years	7	7-10	Yes
4 years	8	8-10	Yes

[21] McCall, State Comptroller, "Child Care Services in New York City," *Report 4-98* (New York, NY: Office of the State Deputy Comptroller, December 18, 1997,) p. 8.

[22] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[23] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[24] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[25] Information from New York State Child Care Coordinating Council, Albany, NY; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[26] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools. (October 16, 1997).

[27] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[28] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[29] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[30] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[31] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[32] National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW).

[33] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[34] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[35] Information on the number of accredited programs from David Hunt at the New York State Child Care Coordinating Council in Albany, NY, April 27, 1998; information on the number of licensed child care homes from the New York State Office of Children and Family Services, *Providers/Capacity Report*, September 1997.

[36] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[37] Child Care Council of Suffolk, Inc., Suffolk County, NY, *The Book of Families* (Washington, DC: National Association for Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998).

[38] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[39] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[40] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[41] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[42] Information on the number of accredited programs from David Hunt at the New York State Child Care Coordinating Council in Albany, NY, April 27, 1998.

[43] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[44] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[45] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[46] Information from New York State Child Care Coordinating Council, Albany, NY; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[47] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[48] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[49] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[50] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[51] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[52] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[53] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[54] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[55] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[56] Information from New York State Child Care Coordinating Council, Albany, NY; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[57] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[58] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[59] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[60] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[61] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the New York State Office of Children and Family Services, *Providers/Capacity Report*, September 1997.

[62] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[63] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[64] New York State Office of Children and Family Services, *Providers/Capacity Report*, September 1997.

[65] New York State Office of Children and Family Services, *Providers/Capacity Report*, September 1997.
[66] New York State Office of Children and Family Services, *Providers/Capacity Report*, September 1997.
[67] New York State Office of Children and Family Services, *Providers/Capacity Report*, September 1997.
[68] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

PENNSYLVANIA:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Pennsylvania parents.

- Every day, about 555,200 children younger than six are in child care in Pennsylvania if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Pennsylvania work to help support their families. An estimated 56 percent of Pennsylvania mothers with children younger than six, and 73 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2] There were 1.27 million children under age 14 in Pennsylvania with all parents working (both parents for two-parent households or the sole parent for single-parent families) in 1990.[3]
- For many mothers in Pennsylvania and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[4] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[5] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[6]
- With so many parents needing to work, child care has become a major issue for Pennsylvania families. For example, a study of child care in York County found that nearly 18,000 children younger than six in York County spend 85 percent of their waking hours in care provided by someone other than their parents. More than three in five of the parents of York County children work outside the home.[7]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Pennsylvania.

Child care is costly for many families in Pennsylvania.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Pennsylvania in 1997 was $4,994[8]—less than the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Allegheny County, and about three-quarters of the average cost for an infant in a center.
- Many families in Pennsylvania earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Pennsylvania with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year, and there are about 826,620 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[9]

- In Pennsylvania, child care for a preschooler or infant can easily cost an average of $5,000 to $7,000 per year. Child care is expensive for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. For example, the average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Allegheny County in 1997 was $5,465, with fees as high as $8,840; and the average cost in Lawrence was $4,935, with fees as high as $6,500.[10] These expenses are for only one child—families with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Pennsylvania[11]

Child Care Centers (1997)

Age of child	Allegheny County		NE Philadelphia		Lawrence	
	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$6,664	$10,027	$6,822	$7,800	$5,915	$7,488
4 years	$5,465	$8,840	$5,239	$6,240	$4,935	$6,500
8 years[12]	$4,385	$7,188	$3,964	$4,251	$3,793	$4,860

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

Age of child	Allegheny County		NE Philadelphia		Lawrence	
	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$5,679	$10,400	$4,992	$6,500	$4,706	$5,850
4 years	$5,332	$10,400	$4,625	$5,200	$4,610	$5,850
8 years	$4,025	$8,386	$3,577	$3,799	$3,748	$4,963

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in Allegheny County, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *57 percent* of their income for child care.
- Pennsylvanians support efforts to help make child care more affordable for families. A recent poll conducted by Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children and Mansfield University found that 75 percent of Pennsylvanians would favor giving tax breaks to working families to help pay for child care expenses.[13]

> *Lisa, a 31-year-old mother from Reading, describes why she needs help paying for child care: "I am a single mother with three small children. One-quarter of my earnings go to child care. It will be more in the summer when I need full-time child care."*[14]

Many low-income working families in Pennsylvania are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Pennsylvania only allows low-income working families earning less than $31,326 (for a family of three) to be eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $36,300.[15] Despite the fact that the state already has income cutoffs significantly below the level allowed under federal law, the state Department of Welfare has proposed regulations to lower eligibility even further, to an annual income level of $24,660 (185 percent of poverty). *If* this proposal goes into effect, Pennsylvania will have lower income cutoffs than 21 other states, including nearby states such as New York, New Jersey, and Michigan.[16]

- Even with eligibility cutoffs below those allowed under federal law, Pennsylvania is unable to serve all eligible families who apply for assistance because it lacks sufficient funds. As of December 1997, 11,000 children were on the waiting list for child care assistance.[17] There are waiting lists in all of Pennsylvania's counties, and these lists continue to grow. In Philadelphia, the waiting list is up to about 1,700 families, an increase of nearly 400 from last year.[18] Several counties have not enrolled a single new low-income working family in over a year.[19]
- A 1997 study of low-income families on the waiting list in Philadelphia demonstrates that families who are unable to receive the child care assistance they need find it difficult to afford quality care and make ends meet. Among the study's findings:
  - ⇒ Philadelphia families on the waiting list have to spend more on child care, leaving less money left over to pay for essentials such as food, rent, and health care. Parents waiting for assistance had child care expenses that averaged nearly $70 a week, while families receiving assistance paid child care fees, based on a sliding-fee scale, that averaged $25 per week. One family on the waiting list paid $213 per week.[20]
  - ⇒ Due to financial constraints, families on the waiting list were half as likely to be able to make quality one of their top criteria in selecting child care.[21]
  - ⇒ Families on the waiting list were less likely to locate suitable child care. One out of every four families waiting for subsidized child care who were surveyed indicated had that they switched providers while waiting, due to dissatisfaction with the care provided. This compared to only one out of seven families who were already enrolled in the subsidy program.[22]
  - ⇒ Some Philadelphia families waiting for subsidized care reported that they had to rely on their older children to watch the younger children. This situation occasionally had an impact on the older child's ability to attend school. One woman kept her 16-year-old home from school one week each month to care for her younger children when she could no longer afford to pay for formal child care.[23]

Parents unable to receive child care assistance lose opportunities to improve their lives

Jackie and her four-year-old daughter Tamika live in Philadelphia with Jackie's parents. Jackie, who is in her mid-twenties, works 40 hours a week and in the evenings attends community college. She is working toward her degree in accounting and is about two and a half years from completing the program. Jackie's mother currently watches Tamika every day from the time Jackie goes to work until she returns home in the evening from school. Jackie applied for subsidized child care six months ago when her grandmother became ill and it appeared as if Jackie's mother would have to start caring for her. They expect that this will happen soon, and Jackie's mother will no longer be able to care for Tamika. Jackie panics when she thinks about trying to afford child care. She is also worried because her work schedule often requires her to work weekends (in order to not miss school in the evenings), but weekend care is very difficult to find. Jackie desperately needs the subsidy to afford child care during the week and to pay a baby-sitter for weekend and evening care. Jackie is frightened that her plan to become self-sufficient may disintegrate.[24]

- While there are many low-income families on the waiting list in Pennsylvania, this list actually *underestimates* the number of eligible families who are not getting help paying for child care. The state reports that some eligible families do not even bother to sign up because they believe it is futile with so many families ahead of them on the list. In addition, the state is not confident that all eligible families even know they can get child care assistance.[25]
- The situation is likely to get worse in coming years, as more families are required to move from welfare to work. In 1997, almost one-fifth of the adult caseload was required to work or participate in work-related activities, which affected the parents of nearly 50,000 children.[26] The proportion of the caseload required to work will more than double in the next few years, leading to an even greater demand for child care assistance. Yet, in a recent survey, Pennsylvania reported that, without additional funds, it is not confident that it will be able to meet this increased demand.[27] Low-income working families who are *not* on welfare may end up losing assistance as more families on welfare need help.

Families who cannot get assistance are unable to afford quality care

In Philadelphia, Bernice's husband left her last summer after eight years of marriage. She has two children, ages eight and four, and works full-time as a secretary making $1,500 monthly. She has no family in the area. After her husband left, she moved because she could no longer afford the rent on their home, and lost her neighborhood and immediate support system. Bernice applied for child care assistance eight months ago, but she is still on the waiting list. While she is waiting, her children have been paying the price.

Bernice's youngest daughter was enrolled in a child care center for $110 per week prior to the separation. Currently, she is enrolled in a family day care home for $35 a week two blocks from their new home. Bernice does not think her daughter is being taught anything in the child care home.

Bernice's oldest daughter attends the local public elementary school and then walks to the same family day care home. Bernice is worried about her daughter's unescorted walk from school every day because she still is not comfortable with her neighborhood. Bernice "gets a little nervous every afternoon around 3:00 until she calls to let me know that she's made it there safely."

And the long summer looms ever closer. Bernice despairs that she will not be able to afford summer care for her older daughter and does not know what she will do with her during the school vacation. She does not want to leave her home alone. Bernice would like to enroll both of her daughters in a quality program much closer to the school. The program escorts the children from the school to the center, which is licensed and highly regarded by her coworkers. In addition, the program has a structured summer day camp for school vacation. However, she could not begin to pay the cost for even one of her daughters—much less both of them—without assistance.[28]

- Parents who do have access to assistance believe that it helps them be more productive—in a 1997 survey of Philadelphia families receiving child care subsidies, over two-thirds said they believe there is a direct link between the assistance they receive and increased productivity at work.[29] Unfortunately, many families are not able to receive this kind of assistance, and as a result do not have the reliable child care they need to concentrate on their jobs.

Child care assistance makes a difference

One Philadelphia parent on a child care subsidy waiting list says, "I'm stuck in limbo, not able to focus on the future or my job." Meanwhile, a parent enrolled in a subsidy program comments, "The subsidy helps me work full time and makes me very dependable."[30]

- Pennsylvania does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 41 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Pennsylvania spent 47 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[31]

Many low-income families in Pennsylvania fortunate enough to receive child care assistance still face limited options due to inadequate state policies.

- Families in Pennsylvania who receive child care assistance still face enormous difficulties finding providers who will take care of their children, as the amount the state will pay for care is below market prices. As of January 1998, the amount that Pennsylvania paid for child care was based on the cost of care in *1994*.[32] Consequently, the state's rates failed to cover the costs of significant numbers of providers. In one Pennsylvania county, the state's rates for infant care were lower than the rates charged by *two-thirds* of the child care providers.[33]
- Since in many cases the state's low reimbursement rates do not cover the provider's costs, some Pennsylvania providers will serve only a limited number of children receiving subsidies.[34] As a result, parents have few options when searching for child care, unless the parent makes up the difference between the state rate and the rate that the provider charges (in addition to the parent fees required by the state).
- Many other states, including Virginia, Maryland, Indiana, and Michigan, pay providers at levels that reflect current market prices, thus allowing families receiving child care subsidies a broader range of choices than in Pennsylvania.[35]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Pennsylvania are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Pennsylvania affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[36] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[37] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[38]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Pennsylvania.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Pennsylvania's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Pennsylvania—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Pennsylvania's children from harm.
- Pennsylvania is one of the many states that do not adequately protect their children. For example, the state allows individuals caring for fewer than four children in their homes to operate without having to meet any licensing health and safety protections. This means that a provider with a history of child abuse could legally care for children in his/her home, and that a program could legally operate with safety hazards such as uncovered electrical outlets or poisonous substances that are not locked away.

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[39] Pennsylvania is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[40] It is also one of 32 states that allow assistant teachers in child care centers to start work without prior training.[41]
- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[42] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Pennsylvania was only $13,340.[43] Even a director of a child care center with over 10 years of experience might still only earn about $23,000 per year, according to the Pennsylvania Association of Child Care Agencies (PACCA).[44] Furthermore, national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[45]
- Family child care providers earn particularly low wages. In Philadelphia, a family child care provider earned an average of $5,920 in 1997.[46] Yet family child care providers work hard for this minimal pay—typically operating full-time, year-round businesses, and working an average of 60 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.[47]
- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in Pennsylvania, reaching 34 percent for assistants and 31 percent for teachers in child care centers in 1992.[48] A local study conducted recently found similarly high turnover rates. The study determined that in Chester, Delaware, Bucks, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties, the annual turnover rate for child care center teachers is 29 percent and the rate for assistant teachers is 33 percent.[49] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[50]

Child care providers in Pennsylvania cannot afford to stay in the child care business

Lori, a 29-year-old mother and child care provider from Philadelphia writes of her reasons for leaving the child care field: "I will soon be leaving my job as a child care provider. I enjoy the center I work with, the children, and the intelligent, caring people I work with. I am leaving because I am making $5.15 an hour to do a job worth at least $10.00 an hour. Of course you can't put a worthy price on caring for our nation's greatest resource, it's children, but at least a fair working wage would be justice. I fear for the next generation. They deserve quality care, security, and to have their young minds stimulated. But that's just not going to happen at this rate. You can't expect hard working decent women to keep plugging away with endless energy, when they are insulted every week at the sight of their paychecks."[51]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Pennsylvania.

- Many parents want their children to get the high-quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are hard to find in Pennsylvania. In 1997, only about 144 of Pennsylvania's 3,281 licensed child care centers (or 4 percent) were accredited.[52] Accredited centers are particularly scarce, or even nonexistent, in some communities—for instance, in Lawrence, none of the 16 licensed centers are accredited.[53]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Pennsylvania face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

Many families in Pennsylvania have trouble finding good child care in their communities.

- There is only one licensed child care slot in Pennsylvania for every five children younger than 14 whose parents are working. There were an estimated 1.27 million children under 14 with all parents working as of the most recent census,[54] but currently licensed child care centers and homes only have enough spaces to accommodate 253,000 children.[55]
- There is a shortage of licensed care in rural areas of Pennsylvania, according to local experts. In some of the state's rural counties, there are no licensed child care centers or child care group homes. There is also little full-day child care available for children of any age in four of Lawrence County's nine school districts.[56]

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Pennsylvania school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Pennsylvania families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 375,556 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Pennsylvania live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[57]

- Pennsylvania children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[58] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[59] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[60] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.

> *"The kids come home after-school and their uncle comes by to check on them. But I cannot afford summer care and cannot afford to pay for two kids each week. It's about safety and they need more guidance than they are getting by themselves."*[61]
>
> *A Philadelphia parent on the waiting list for child care assistance*

- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Pennsylvania, only one in seven public schools (3,128 or 13 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[62]
- There is widespread public support for ensuring that school-age children have safe places to go before- and after-school. According to a recent poll, 79 percent of Pennsylvanians agree that child care should be made available for school-age children of welfare recipients.[63]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Pennsylvania.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[64] This means as many as 66,000 babies in Pennsylvania are in child care if national patterns hold true.[65]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Pennsylvania's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping babies grow, Pennsylvania was one of only 13 states that in 1997 met recommended levels for the number of babies and toddlers a single caregiver was allowed to care for.[66]
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Pennsylvania to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. For example, child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Allegheny County in 1997 averaged $6,664, but could cost as much as $10,027.[67]
- Families have trouble finding infant care in some parts of Pennsylvania. For example, only 46 of the 88 child care centers in York County provide infant care. Some of these programs have waiting lists up to one year in length.[68]

Other families in Pennsylvania face shortages of care as well—such as families where the children have special needs.

- Local experts report that there is very limited access to licensed care for children with special needs. Despite requirements for equal access under the Americans with Disabilities Act, Pennsylvania providers typically only accept children with special needs if their physical, emotional or mental disability or delay is minimal. Consequently, the many Pennsylvania families that have children with more severe special needs have few—if any—programs to serve their children.[69]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Pennsylvania

Number of children younger than one[70]	146,724
Number of children younger than six[71]	925,408
Number of children ages six to 17[72]	1,969,268
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[73]	66,000
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[74]	555,200
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[75]	56%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[76]	73%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Pennsylvania

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[77]	826,621
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Pennsylvania[78]	$4,994

Annual Child Care Costs in Pennsylvania[79]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Allegheny County		NE Philadelphia		Lawrence	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$6,664	$10,027	$6,822	$7,800	$5,915	$7,488
4 years	$5,465	$8,840	$5,239	$6,240	$4,935	$6,500
8 years[80]	$4,385	$7,188	$3,964	$4,251	$3,793	$4,860

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Allegheny County		NE Philadelphia		Lawrence	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$5,679	$10,400	$4,992	$6,500	$4,706	$5,850
4 years	$5,332	$10,400	$4,625	$5,200	$4,610	$5,850
8 years	$4,025	$8,386	$3,577	$3,799	$3,748	$4,963

Many Children in Pennsylvania Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Pennsylvania require any training for assistant teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[81]	No
Does Pennsylvania require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[82]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in Pennsylvania in 1996[83]	$13,340
Annual turnover rate for child care center teachers in Pennsylvania in 1992[84]	31%
Percentage of child care centers in Pennsylvania that were accredited as of 1997[85]	4%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Pennsylvania[86]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[87]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	5	3-5	Yes
27 months	6	4-6	Yes
3 years	10	7-10	Yes
4 years	10	8-10	Yes

Other Child Care Indicators in Pennsylvania

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[88]	3,281
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[89]	632
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[90]	3,854
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[91]	13%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children, "The State of the Child in Pennsylvania, A 1997 Guide to Child Well-Being in Pennsylvania Counties," *State of the Child in Pennsylvania Fact Book Series*, (Harrisburg, PA: Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children, 1997), p.11.

[4] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[5] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[6] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[7] "Facts on Child Care in York County," *Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children Quarterly Newsletter*, April 1998.

[8] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[9] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[10] Information on costs in Allegheny County from Child Care Resources in Pittsburgh and information on costs in Philadelphia and Lawrence County from Pennsylvania Association of Child Care Agencies in Harrisburg; collected through a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[11] Information on costs in Allegheny County from Child Care Resources in Pittsburgh and information on costs in Philadelphia and Lawrence County from Pennsylvania Association of Child Care Agencies in Harrisburg; collected through a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[12] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[13] Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children and Pennsylvania Association of Child Care Agencies, *Caring for Children in Pennsylvania's Working Families, Facts on Child Care in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg, PA: Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children and Pennsylvania Association of Child Care Agencies, 1997).

[14] From Lifetime Television's online project "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment" which collects stories about child care from families around the country. It is found at www.lifetimetv.com.

[15] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[16] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[17] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[18] Tomlinson and Dichter, *Watching Out for Children in Changing Times* (Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth and United Way of Southeastern PA, December 1997), p. 4.

[19] Information from Pennsylvania Association of Child Care Agencies in Harrisburg; collected through a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[20] Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth, et al. *Use of Subsidized Child Care by Philadelphia Families* (Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth, 1997), p. 9.

[21] One in four of the waiting list families indicated that they were able to consider child care quality as one of the factors in assessing the child care they used, compared to two in four of the families receiving subsidies. Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth, et al. *Use of Subsidized Child Care by Philadelphia Families* (Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth, 1997), p. 2.

[22] Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth, et al. *Use of Subsidized Child Care by Philadelphia Families* (Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth, 1997), p. 2.

[23] Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth, et al. *Use of Subsidized Child Care by Philadelphia Families* (Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth, 1997), p. 8.

[24] Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth, et al. *Use of Subsidized Child Care by Philadelphia Families* (Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth, 1997), p. 13.

[25] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[26] Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children, "The State of the Child in Pennsylvania, A 1997 Guide to Child Well-Being in Pennsylvania Counties," *State of the Child in Pennsylvania Fact Book Series*, (Harrisburg, PA: Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children, 1997), p. 11.

[27] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[28] Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth, et al. *Use of Subsidized Child Care by Philadelphia Families* (Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth, 1997), p. 2.

[29] Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth, et al. *Use of Subsidized Child Care by Philadelphia Families* (Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth, 1997), p. 5.

[30] Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth, et al. *Use of Subsidized Child Care by Philadelphia Families* (Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth, 1997), p. 5.

[31] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[32] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[33] Information from Pennsylvania Association of Child Care Agencies in Harrisburg; collected through a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[34] Information from Pennsylvania Association of Child Care Agencies in Harrisburg; collected through a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[35] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[36] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[37] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[38] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[39] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools. (October 16, 1997).

[40] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[41] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997). Pennsylvania does require lead teachers in child care centers to have a bachelor's or associate's degree in early childhood education.

[42] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[43] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes

teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[44] Information from Pennsylvania Association of Child Care Agencies in Harrisburg; collected through a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[45] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[46] *Survey of Family Child Care Providers, Philadelphia, PA, 1997*, prepared by the Center for the Child Care Workforce, for the Delaware Valley Association for the Education of Young Children, Philadelphia, PA, as reported in *Current Data on Child Care Salaries and Benefits in the United States*, Center for the Child Care Workforce (Washington, DC: Center for the Child Care Workforce, March 1998).

[47] Burton, Sakai and Whitebook, "Valuable Work, Minimal Rewards," *A Report on the Wisconsin Child Care Work Force, 1994* (Wisconsin: National Center for the Early Childhood Work Force, Wisconsin Early Childhood Association, 1994) p. iii.

[48] Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children and Pennsylvania Association of Child Care Advocates, *Caring for Children in Pennsylvania's Working Families, Facts on Child Care in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg, PA: Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children and Pennsylvania Association of Child Care Agencies, 1997).

[49] *Highlights from the Pennsylvania Child Care Staff Salaries, Benefits, and Working Conditions Study: 1998*, prepared by the Center for the Child Care Workforce for the Delaware Valley Association for the Education of Young Children, as reported in *Current Data on Child Care Salaries and Benefits in the United States*, Center for the Child Care Workforce (Washington, DC: Center for the Child Care Workforce, March 1998).

[50] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[51] From Lifetime Television's online project "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment" which collects stories about child care from families around the country. It is found at www.lifetimetv.com.

[52] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[53] Information from Pennsylvania Association of Child Care Agencies in Harrisburg; collected through a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[54] Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children, "The State of the Child in Pennsylvania, A 1997 Guide to Child Well-Being in Pennsylvania Counties," *State of the Child in Pennsylvania Fact Book Series*, (Harrisburg, PA: Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children, 1997), p. 11.

[55] Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children and Pennsylvania Association of Child Care Agencies, *Caring for Children in Pennsylvania's Working Families, Facts on Child Care in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg, PA: Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children and Pennsylvania Association of Child Care Agencies, 1997).

[56] Information from Pennsylvania Association of Child Care Agencies in Harrisburg; collected through a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[57] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[58] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[59] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[60] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[61] Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth, et al. *Use of Subsidized Child Care by Philadelphia Families* (Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth, 1997), p. 7.

[62] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[63] From the poll "The Commonwealth Speaks: A 1997 Public Opinion Poll on Children's Issues," cited in Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children, *How Do Children, Families Fare In New State Budget?* (Harrisburg, PA: Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children, Summer 1997), p. 1.

[64] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[65] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[66] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[67] Information on costs in Allegheny County from Child Care Resources in Pittsburgh and information on costs in Philadelphia and Lawrence County from Pennsylvania Association of Child Care Agencies in Harrisburg; collected through a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[68] "Facts on Child Care in York County," *Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children Quarterly Newsletter*, April 1998.

[69] Information from Pennsylvania Association of Child Care Agencies in Harrisburg; collected through a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[70] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[71] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[72] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[73] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[74] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[75] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[76] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[77] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[78] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[79] Information on costs in Allegheny County from Child Care Resources in Pittsburgh and information on costs in Philadelphia and Lawrence County from Pennsylvania Association of Child Care Agencies in Harrisburg; collected through a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[80] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[81] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997). Pennsylvania does require lead teachers in child care centers to have a bachelor's or associate's degree in early childhood education.

[82] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[83] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[84] Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children and Pennsylvania Association of Child Care Agencies, *Caring for Children in Pennsylvania's Working Families, Facts on Child Care in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg, PA: Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children and Pennsylvania Association of Child Care Agencies, 1997).

[85] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[86] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[87] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[88] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[89] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[90] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[91] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

RHODE ISLAND:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Rhode Island parents.

- Every day, about 46,200 children younger than six are in child care in Rhode Island if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 or more hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Rhode Island work to help support their families. An estimated 59 percent of Rhode Island mothers with children younger than six, and 79 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Rhode Island and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Rhode Island.

Child care is costly for many families in Rhode Island.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Rhode Island in 1997 was $3,907[6]—about four-fifths the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center, and just over half the average cost for an infant.
- Many families in Rhode Island earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Rhode Island with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year, and there are about 64,170 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[7]
- In Rhode Island, child care for a four-year-old in a child care center cost an average of $4,784 in 1997, with fees as high as $8,320. Child care is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. The average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Providence was $4,420, with fees as high as $5,980; and the average annual cost in Burrillville was $3,900, with fees as high as $4,212.[8] These expenses are for only one child. Parents with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Rhode Island[9]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Providence		Burrillville	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$7,020	$10,400	$6,500	$10,400	n.a.	n.a.
4 years	$4,784	$8,320	$4,420	$5,980	$3,900	$4,212
8 years[10]	$6,589	$7,188	$6,948	$7,188	$4,792	$4,792

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Providence		Burrillville	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$5,356	$9,100	$4,524	$9,100	n.a.	$6,500
4 years	$4,680	$9,100	$3,900	$8,840	$5,148	$6,500
8 years	$3,594	$5,247	$3,594	$5,247	$4,792	$5,092

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in Rhode Island, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *55 percent* of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in Rhode Island are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Many hard-working, low-income families in Rhode Island are not even *eligible* for any help paying for child care. As of January 1998, the state only allows families with incomes below $24,660 (for a family of three) to qualify for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $36,670. The cutoff in Rhode Island is lower than in a number of neighboring states, including Connecticut, Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey.[11] Rhode Island has, however, taken an important step forward by guaranteeing child care assistance to families who meet the state income guidelines. Most states do not offer such a guarantee.

Low-income working parents who do not qualify for child care assistance struggle to make ends meet

Elaine Blackman is a single mother who earns about $28,000 a year as a clerk for Eastern Utilities in Rhode Island—just enough so that she does not qualify for state child care subsidies for her two daughters, Amberlee (age five) and Michaela (age three). But she also cannot afford to pay the going rate of more than $200 a week that many child care centers charge for two children, especially since her take-home pay after taxes and other deductions is only about $300 a week. She could have taken a lower-paying job, making her eligible for welfare, food stamps, housing assistance and child care subsidies. Elaine is only able to keep her current job because she managed to find a local organization that helps her pay for care, which lowers her weekly child care costs to $138 a week.[12]

- In a recent survey, the state reported that it is not clear that there will be enough supply of quality child care in Rhode Island to meet the need that will be generated in future years by the increase in welfare work requirements. Additional funds will be needed to ensure that low-income families who need child care are able to find good providers to care for their children.[13]

- Rhode Island does not invest enough in helping families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 46 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Rhode Island spent 47 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[14]

Even those families who are fortunate enough to receive child care assistance in Rhode Island face limited options because the state pays so little for subsidies.

- Families in Rhode Island who receive child care assistance still face enormous difficulties finding providers who will take care of their children, as the amount the state will pay for care is below market prices. The state has approved a plan to increase rates to be more reflective of market costs by the year 2000. However, as of January 1998, the amount that Rhode Island paid for child care was *significantly* below even what child care cost in *1993*—which means that parents receiving subsidies faced limited choices.[15] As a result of these low rates, Options for Working Parents—a Rhode Island resource and referral agency which helps families find care—reports that many providers across the state limit the number of subsidized children they will serve.[16]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Rhode Island are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Rhode Island affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[17] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[18] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[19]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Rhode Island.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Rhode Island's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Rhode Island—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Rhode Island's children from harm.

- Rhode Island allows individuals caring for fewer than four children in their homes to operate without having to meet any licensing health and safety protections. This means that a provider with a history of child abuse could legally care for as many as three children in his/her home, and that a program could legally operate with safety hazards such as uncovered electrical outlets or poisonous substances that are not locked away.[20]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[21] Rhode Island is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[22]
- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[23] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Rhode Island was only $13,740 (only slightly above minimum wage).[24] Furthermore, national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[25]
- Rhode Island provides health care coverage to licensed family child care providers who care for children receiving state aid. These providers can enroll in the State's Rite Care health insurance program. Rhode Island is the only state offering health and dental insurance to licensed, home-based providers.[26]
- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers; nationwide, about one-third of child care teachers leave their centers each year.[27] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers are only 6.6 percent.[28]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Rhode Island.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs. Yet such programs are scarce in Rhode Island. In 1997, only about 15 of Rhode Island's 315 licensed child care centers (or 5 percent) were accredited,[29] including only four of the 46 centers in Providence. Some communities in the state have no accredited programs—for example, neither of the two licensed centers in Burrillville is accredited.[30]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Rhode Island face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Rhode Island school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Rhode Island families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 31,204 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Rhode Island live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[31]
- Rhode Island children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[32] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[33] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[34] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Rhode Island, only one out of every 14 public schools (295 or 7 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[35]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Rhode Island.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[36] This means as many as 5,400 babies in Rhode Island are in child care if national patterns hold true.[37]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Rhode Island's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping very young children grow, Rhode Island allows a single caregiver to care for six 18-month-old toddlers. In comparison, early childhood experts recommend that a single caregiver be responsible for no more than three to five toddlers this age.[38] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, diaper, play, and care for six active 18-month-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency.
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Rhode Island to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Rhode Island in 1997 averaged $7,020, but could cost as much as $10,400.[39]

- Some Rhode Island families with infants have very limited options. For example, there are no centers that offer infant care in the rural county of Burrillville,[40] and no licensed infant slots in centers in Central Falls.[41]

The gap between the supply of child care and the need for it will grow as more families move from welfare to work.

- There are serious concerns in Rhode Island about whether families coming off welfare will be able to find any child care providers to care for their children due to inadequate supply. For example, a statewide study found that in some communities—including core cities—there are more children whose parents are participating in welfare-to-work efforts than there are licensed slots overall (including those that are filled). For example:
  - ⇒ In Central Falls, there are 262 infants and toddlers whose parents are moving from welfare to work—but there are *no* child care center slots for infants/toddlers, and a total of only 43 licensed family child care slots overall (which can be for children of any age up to age 12).[42]
  - ⇒ In Providence, there are 5,708 children between the ages of one and five whose parents are participating in welfare reform. Yet there are only a total of 3,803 licensed slots in the city, most of which are filled.[43]
  - ⇒ Statewide, the *total* number of licensed slots in child care programs in the state (most of which are currently filled) is only slightly greater than the number of children whose parents are participating in the Family Independence Plan (FIP).[44]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Rhode Island

Number of children younger than one[45]	12,074
Number of children younger than six[46]	77,054
Number of children ages six to 17[47]	158,229
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[48]	5,400
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[49]	46,200
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[50]	59%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[51]	79%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Rhode Island

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty) [52]	64,170
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Rhode Island[53]	$3,907

Annual Child Care Costs in Rhode Island[54]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Providence		Burrillville	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$7,020	$10,400	$6,500	$10,400	n.a.	n.a.
4 years	$4,784	$8,320	$4,420	$5,980	$3,900	$4,212
8 years[55]	$6,589	$7,188	$6,948	$7,188	$4,792	$4,792

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Providence		Burrillville	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$5,356	$9,100	$4,524	$9,100	n.a.	$6,500
4 years	$4,680	$9,100	$3,900	$8,840	$5,148	$6,500
8 years	$3,594	$5,247	$3,594	$5,247	$4,792	$5,092

Many Children in Rhode Island Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Rhode Island require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children? [56]	Yes
Does Rhode Island require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children? [57]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in Rhode Island in 1996[58]	$13,740
Percentage of child care centers in Rhode Island that were accredited as of 1997[59]	5%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Rhode Island[60]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[61]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	6	3-5	No
27 months	6	4-6	Yes
3 years	9	7-10	Yes
4 years	10	8-10	Yes

Other Child Care Indicators in Rhode Island

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[62]	315
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[63]	8
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[64]	708
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[65]	7%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from Options for Working Parents, Providence, RI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[9] Information from Options for Working Parents, Providence, RI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[10] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[11] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[12] Meade, "Child-care crunch hits home," Providence, RI: *The Providence Journal Bulletin*, October 24, 1997, p. A1.

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[15] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[16] Information from Options for Working Parents, Providence, RI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[17] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[18] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[19] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[20] Information from Options for Working Parents, Providence, RI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[21] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools. (October 16, 1997).

[22] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[23] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[24] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[25] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[26] *Rhode Island Kids Count*, "Issue Brief," No. 4, (Providence, RI: October 1997), p. 4. and information from Options for Working Parents, Providence, RI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[27] National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW).

[28] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[29] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[30] Information from Options for Working Parents, Providence, RI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[31] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[32] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[33] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[34] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[35] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[36] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[37] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[38] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[39] Information from Options for Working Parents, Providence, RI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[40] Information from Options for Working Parents, Providence, RI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[41] Information from Options for Working Parents, Providence, RI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[42] Information from Options for Working Parents and the Rhode Island Department of Human Services, cited in *Rhode Island Kids Count*, "Issue Brief," No. 4, (Providence, RI: October 1997), p. 5.

[43] Information from Options for Working Parents and the Rhode Island Department of Human Services, cited in *Rhode Island Kids Count*, "Issue Brief," No. 4, (Providence, RI: October 1997), p. 5.

[44] Information from Options for Working Parents and the Rhode Island Department of Human Services, cited in *Rhode Island Kids Count*, "Issue Brief," No. 4, (Providence, RI: October 1997), p. 5.

[45] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[46] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[47] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[48] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[49] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[50] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[51] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[52] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[53] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[54] Information from Options for Working Parents, Providence, RI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[55] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[56] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[57] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[58] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[59] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[60] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[61] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[62] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[63] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[64] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[65] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

VERMONT:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Vermont parents.

- Every day, about 26,100 children younger than six are in child care in Vermont if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Vermont work to help support their families. An estimated 66 percent of Vermont mothers with children younger than six, and 82 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Vermont and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

Vermont families value quality child care

A Vermont mom writes, "My husband and I don't work so that we can tootle off on lavish vacations while the children stay at grandma's. We work so that the mortgage will get paid, the college fund will grow and the endless supply of spaghetti Brenna eats will remain just that, endless....I will also be whispering a quiet thank you to all the caregivers who held her when she cut her first tooth, who answered her 179th question of the day and, most important, taught her that love exists not only in her home, but in other places as well."[6]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Vermont.

Child care is costly for many families in Vermont.

- Child care can cost more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Vermont in 1997 was $6,538,[7] which was significantly higher than the average cost of public college in any other state, but still below the average cost of care for a one-year-old in a center in Burlington and less than some families pay for child care for their four-year-old.

- Many families in Vermont earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Vermont with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 43,470 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[8]

- In Vermont, child care for a preschooler or infant could easily cost an average of $5,000 to $7,000 in 1997. Child care is expensive for families whether they use child care centers or family child care homes. In Burlington in 1997, the average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center was $5,876, with fees as high as $7,280; and the average cost in a family child care home was $5,148, with fees as high as $10,400.[9] These expenses are for only one child—families with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Vermont[10]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Burlington		Hinesburg	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	n.a.	n.a.	$6,604	$7,540	n.a.	n.a.
4 years	n.a.	n.a.	$5,876	$7,280	n.a.	n.a.
8 years[11]	n.a.	n.a.	$3,002	$4,193	n.a.	n.a.

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Burlington		Hinesburg	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,803	$7,800	$5,200	$6,500	$4,628	$5,200
4 years	$4,193	$10,400	$5,148	$10,400	$4,420	$5,148
8 years	$2,648	$5,990	$3,414	$5,990	$3,354	$4,792

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in Burlington, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *58 percent* of their income for child care.

- In many cases, parents have additional expenses on top of these basic child care costs, since most providers require parents to provide supplies. For instance, a 1995 study found that four out of five Vermont providers asked parents to donate items (such as baby formula or food, diapers and related supplies) to help support their child care services.[12]

Many low-income working families in Vermont are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Vermont only allows low-income working families earning less than $26,664 (for a family of three) to be eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $33,800. This cutoff is lower than the cutoff in a number of other states, including nearby states such as Connecticut and Maine.[13]

- Even with Vermont's low income cutoffs, the state is not confident that all eligible families know they can get child care assistance, or that it could serve all eligible families if they did know they could get child care help.[14]

- Vermont will face greater child care challenges in coming years as more families are required to move from welfare to work. In a recent survey, Vermont reported that, without additional funds, it is not confident that it will be able to meet the demand for child care assistance generated by the increase in welfare work requirements. While the state projects that it will serve all eligible welfare families because they are given priority, without additional state or federal resources it will not necessarily be able to serve all eligible low-income working families who are not on welfare.[15]

- Vermont does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only $1.09 out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Vermont spent 31 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[16]

Many low-income Vermont families fortunate enough to receive child care assistance still face limited options due to inadequate state policies.

- Families in Vermont who receive child care assistance still face enormous difficulties finding providers who will take care of their children, as the amount the state is willing to pay for care is almost $100 a month below market prices.[17] The state has failed to adjust its child care subsidy rates to keep pace with the rising cost of care. Since the state started providing subsidies in 1988, the state has only increased its rates three times.[18]

State rates are too low to cover child care costs

The state's rates for subsidized child care are so low that many providers are reluctant to serve families who are receiving assistance. Those providers that do accept the state's rates often do so at financial risk to themselves, as one family child care worker explains: "This is so difficult! I want to be inclusive with varying families economic status. I want to encourage the varied working hours of parents—for instance, parents of an infant may desire part-time care—I support their decision but in accepting them for day care I have not been able to fill a two-day per week slot and [as a result] lose income. I accept SRS [subsidized] rates so I will give care to those who need assistance for day care, again I lose income. I am a single parent of three children; parents and providers need more support from businesses and government—not words—$$$."[19]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Vermont are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Vermont affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[20] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[21] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[22]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Vermont.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Vermont's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Vermont—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Vermont's children from harm.

- A recent report by the Vermont State Auditor found that the resources and staff devoted to safeguarding the quality and safety of Vermont's child care is dangerously small.[23] Although periodic inspections by licensing staff are one of the most important ways to ensure the safety and well-being of children in licensed child care programs, Vermont has only five licensing staff assigned to license and monitor over 2,100 child care programs. Each licensing staff member has a caseload of 420 programs, which is much higher than the national median caseload of 161.

- Vermont's high caseloads make it difficult to ensure the safety and well-being of the 35,000 Vermont children attending licensed programs.[24] A recent report by the Vermont State Auditor found: [25]

  ⇒ The state's efforts to prevent persons with out-of-state criminal or child abuse records from being employed as child caregivers are inadequate.
  ⇒ Despite a relatively high number of "serious" substantiated complaints against family day care homes (17 percent of 238 substantiated complaints in 1996 were deemed serious), the Division does not have in place a consistent and documented system for resolving complaints.
  ⇒ When family day care home registrations and child care licenses are granted on a conditional basis (meaning that the program has problems which it must correct to come into compliance with state standards), the state does no follow-up visits to ensure that such corrective action has been taken. Instead, it relies on self-reporting by the home or center.

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[26] Vermont is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[27] Not surprisingly, a 1995 survey of almost 900 Vermont family child care providers found that only 16 (or 2 percent) had obtained a child care or early childhood credential.[28]

- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[29] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Vermont was only $14,000.[30] Furthermore, national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[31]

- A teacher or director in a child care center in Vermont earns, on average, less than half of what a public school teacher earns, even when they have similar qualifications. The average annual salary for a certified teacher with a bachelor's degree in a public school in Vermont is $38,824. In contrast, the average annual salary for the Vermont director or head teacher in a child care center who is certified and has a bachelor's degree is $15,488.[32]

- Entry-level child care providers can earn more working at McDonald's than in child care. While the average hourly wage for a Vermont high school student at McDonald's is $5.50 per hour, the average hourly wage for a teaching assistant in a child care setting (who must be at least 18 years old) is $5.08 per hour.[33]
- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among Vermont child care providers. The annual turnover rate for family child care providers is 30 percent,[34] and the annual turnover rate for center-based child care teachers is 26 percent. In contrast, the turnover rate for school teachers in Vermont is 5.6 percent annually.[35]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Vermont.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs. Yet, such programs are scarce in Vermont. In 1997, only about 34 of Vermont's 500 licensed child care centers (or 7 percent) were accredited.[36] Accredited programs are difficult to find in all areas of the state; for instance, in Burlington, just nine of the 152 licensed centers are accredited.[37]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Vermont face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Vermont school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Vermont families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 15,695 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Vermont live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[38]
- Vermont children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[39] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[40] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[41] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Vermont, only one in eight public schools (318 or 12 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[42]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Vermont.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[43] This means as many as 3,000 babies in Vermont are in child care if national patterns hold true.[44]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Vermont's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping babies grow, many states allow a single caregiver to care for too many infants and toddlers. In 1997, Vermont was one of only 13 states that met recommended levels for the number of babies and toddlers a single caregiver was allowed to care for.[45]
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Vermont to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. For example, child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Burlington in 1997 averaged $6,604 per year, but could cost as much as $7,540 per year.[46]
- Vermont family child care providers find that the greatest demand is for infant care. In a 1995 survey, 83 percent of the family child care providers surveyed indicated they received many calls for infant care, but had few openings available.[47]

Families trying to find child care in Vermont face a series of barriers

A Vermont mother with a child under two and another entering kindergarten needed child care in order to find work. She ran into several barriers that are common to single mothers in her situation. It was easy to find care for her five-year-old, but next to impossible to find care for her toddler. Her hope was to find a caregiver that could care for both children, given she has no transportation. Location was also a concern, as the only providers that could take both children lived too far out of town and required a vehicle to get there. This mother also needed child care on a part-time basis while she was looking for work, but would obviously need child care full-time when she found a job. Yet, she could not pay for full-time care before she found work. "I find it crazy to put a child in child care for a few hours to look for a job and then down the road when I get a job, that same provider might not even have a full-time opening for my children. Then I'd have to go through this whole process again and my kids would have to get used to a whole new situation," she commented. When last heard from, this mother was still looking.[48]

Other parents in Vermont struggle to find care, including those looking for family child care and those who have children with special needs.

- A 1995 survey found that a substantial percentage (40 percent) of Vermont family day care providers get many calls requesting child care for which there is no opening. Nearly one-quarter of the providers kept a waiting list of families who were seeking care.[49]

Care for children with special needs is especially hard to find

A single Vermont woman is providing foster care (adoption pending) for two preschool-aged children who had been abused when they were young. She has found it very difficult to find adequate child care and keep her job. After about a year and a half, the children are now in their sixth child care program. The children have been removed from a child care program two times due to alleged abuse or neglect in the program—one time the parent found that her children's basic health and safety was in jeopardy. On two occasions, the children were dismissed from the program because the providers were not equipped to deal with the difficult behaviors that resulted from the abuse that they had suffered in their early lives. Because the mother has no family supports or friends to help care for the children, it has been necessary for her to take periods of time off from her low-wage job in order to search for good child care for her children. After many setbacks, the children are now in an adequate child care program that is willing to work with the family.[50]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Vermont

Number of children younger than one[51]	6,644
Number of children younger than six[52]	43,441
Number of children ages six to 17[53]	103,207
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[54]	3,000
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[55]	26,100
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[56]	66%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[57]	82%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Vermont

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[58]	43,470
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Vermont[59]	$6,538

Annual Child Care Costs in Vermont[60]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Burlington		Hinesburg	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	n.a.	n.a.	$6,604	$7,540	n.a.	n.a.
4 years	n.a.	n.a.	$5,876	$7,280	n.a.	n.a.
8 years[61]	n.a.	n.a.	$3,002	$4,193	n.a.	n.a.

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Burlington		Hinesburg	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,803	$7,800	$5,200	$6,500	$4,628	$5,200
4 years	$4,193	$10,400	$5,148	$10,400	$4,420	$5,148
8 years	$2,648	$5,990	$3,414	$5,990	$3,354	$4,792

Many Children in Vermont Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Vermont require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[62]		Yes
Does Vermont require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[63]		No
Average salary for a child care worker in Vermont in 1996[64]		$14,000
Annual turnover rates for child care workers in Vermont:	family child care providers[65]	30%
	child care center teachers[66]	26%
Percentage of child care centers in Vermont that were accredited as of 1997[67]		7%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Vermont[68]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[69]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	4	3-5	Yes
27 months	5	4-6	Yes
3 years	10	7-10	Yes
4 years	10	8-10	Yes

Other Child Care Indicators in Vermont

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[70]	500
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[71]	20
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[72]	1,600
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[73]	12%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Hickey, "Day care laid the foundation for child's future," Burlington, VT: *The Burlington Free Press*, Monday, August 11, 1997, Readers Forum.

[7] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[8] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[9] Information from Child Care Resource, Williston, VT and VT Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, Waterbury, VT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[10] Information from Child Care Resource, Williston, VT and VT Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, Waterbury, VT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[11] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[12] Child Care Services Division, Vermont Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (VACCRRA), et al., *Abridged Report—1995 Family Day Care Market Rates in Vermont* (Montpelier, VT: VACCRRA, December 1996), p. 20.

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[15] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[16] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[17] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[18] Information from Child Care Resource, Williston, VT, Waterbury, VT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[19] Child Care Services Division, Vermont Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (VACCRRA), et al., *1995 Family Day Care Market Rates in Vermont* (Montpelier, VT: VACCRRA, December 1996), p. 64.

[20] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[21] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).
[22] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.
[23] Letter from Vermont State Auditor Edward Flanagan, addressed to Speaker of the House Michael Obuchowski, President Pro-Tempore of the Senate Peter Shumlin, and Governor Howard Dean, MD (Montpelier VT: December 18, 1997).
[24] Letter from Vermont State Auditor Edward Flanagan, addressed to Speaker of the House Michael Obuchowski, President Pro-Tempore of the Senate Peter Shumlin, and Governor Howard Dean, MD (Montpelier VT: December 18, 1997).
[25] Letter from Vermont State Auditor Edward Flanagan, addressed to Speaker of the House Michael Obuchowski, President Pro-Tempore of the Senate Peter Shumlin, and Governor Howard Dean, MD (Montpelier VT: December 18, 1997).
[26] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools. (October 16, 1997).
[27] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).
[28] Child Care Services Division, Vermont Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (VACCRRA), et al. *Abridged Report—1995 Family Day Care Market Rates in Vermont* (Montpelier, VT: VACCRRA, December 1996), p. 23.
[29] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).
[30] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.
[31] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).
[32] Vermont's Child Care Advisory Board, *Vermont's 'How Are The Children?' Campaign, Child Care Advisory Board 1997 Legislative Report* (Montpelier, VT: Vermont's Child Care Advisory Board, 1997), p. 25.
[33] Vermont's Child Care Advisory Board, *Vermont's 'How Are The Children?' Campaign, Child Care Advisory Board 1997 Legislative Report* (Montpelier, VT: Vermont's Child Care Advisory Board, 1997), p. 25.
[34] Information from Child Care Resource, Williston, VT, Waterbury, VT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.
[35] Vermont's Child Care Advisory Board, *Vermont's 'How Are The Children?' Campaign, Child Care Advisory Board 1997 Legislative Report* (Montpelier, VT: Vermont's Child Care Advisory Board, 1997), p. 25.
[36] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.
[37] Information from Child Care Resource, Williston, VT, Waterbury, VT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.
[38] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.
[39] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).
[40] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).
[41] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.
[42] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

[43] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[44] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[45] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[46] Information from Child Care Resource, Williston, VT and VT Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, Waterbury, VT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[47] Child Care Resource, *1995 Family Day Care Market Rate Survey* (Williston, VT: Child Care Resource, December 1997), p. 41.

[48] Information from Child Care Resource, Williston, VT, Waterbury, VT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[49] Child Care Resource, *1995 Family Day Care Market Rate Survey* (Williston, VT: Child Care Resource, December 1997), p. 41.

[50] Information from Child Care Resource, Williston, VT, Waterbury, VT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[51] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[52] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[53] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[54] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[55] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[56] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[57] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[58] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[59] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[60] Information from Child Care Resource, Williston, VT and VT Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, Waterbury, VT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[61] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[62] Azer and Capraro (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[63] Azer and Capraro (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[64] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[65] Information from Child Care Resource, Williston, VT, Waterbury, VT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[66] Vermont's Child Care Advisory Board, *Vermont's 'How Are The Children?' Campaign. Child Care Advisory Board 1997 Legislative Report* (Montpelier, VT: Vermont's Child Care Advisory Board, 1997), p. 25.

[67] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[68] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[69] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[70] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[71] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[72] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[73] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

About the Children's Defense Fund

The Children's Defense Fund (CDF) exists to provide a strong and effective voice for all the children of America, who cannot vote, lobby, or speak for themselves. We pay particular attention to the needs of poor and minority children and those with disabilities. Our goal is to educate the nation about the needs of children and encourage preventive investment in children before they get sick, drop out of school, suffer family breakdown, or get into trouble.

CDF is a unique organization. CDF focuses on programs and policies that affect large numbers of children, rather than on helping families on a case-by-case basis. Our staff includes specialists in health, education, child welfare, mental health, child development, family income, and youth employment. CDF gathers data and disseminates information on key issues affecting children. We monitor the development and implementation of federal and state policies. We provide information, technical assistance, and support to a network of state and local child advocates, service providers, and public and private sector officials and leaders. We pursue an annual legislative agenda in the U.S. Congress and in states where we have offices. CDF educates hundreds of thousands of citizens annually about children's needs and responsible options for meeting those needs.

CDF is a national organization with roots in communities across America. Although our main office is in Washington, D.C., we reach out to towns and cities across the country to monitor the effects of changes in national and state policies and to help people and organizations concerned with what happens to children. CDF maintains state offices in Minnesota and Ohio, and local project offices in Marlboro County (South Carolina), Columbus, Greater Cincinnati, and New York City. CDF has developed cooperative projects with groups in many states.

The Black Community Crusade for Children (BCCC), developed by Black leaders and coordinated by CDF, is an initiative to mobilize the African American community behind a targeted effort to address the special problems facing Black children. The BCCC is part of CDF's overall work to ensure that *no* child is left behind and that *all* American children have a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, a Safe Start, and a Moral Start in life.

CDF is a private, nonprofit organization supported by foundations, corporate grants, and individual donations.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

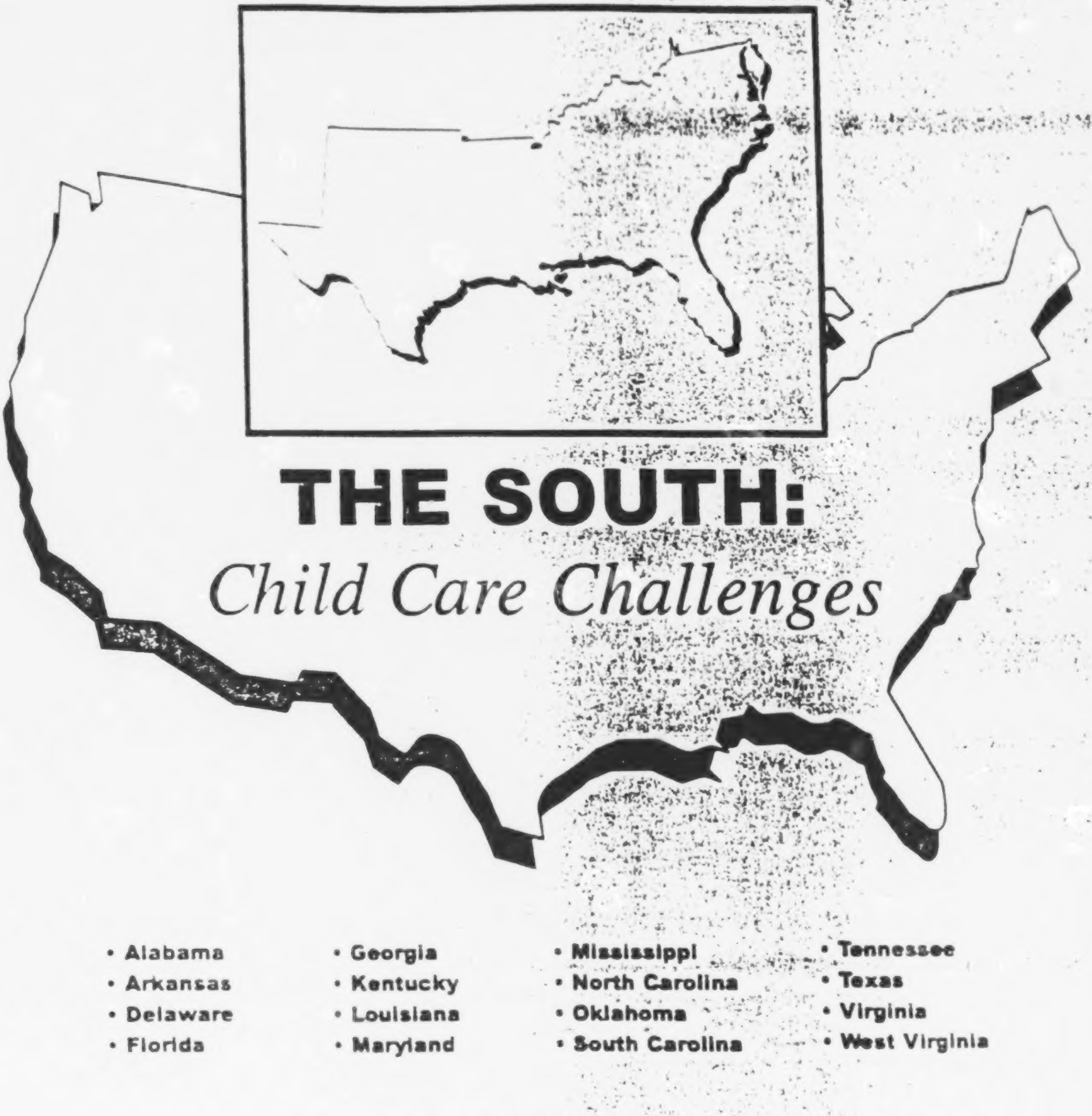
25 Years

LEAVE NO CHILD BEHIND.

---

25 E Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
www.childrensdefense.org

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



THE SOUTH:

Child Care Challenges

- Alabama
- Arkansas
- Delaware
- Florida
- Georgia
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Maryland
- Mississippi
- North Carolina
- Oklahoma
- South Carolina
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Virginia
- West Virginia

Gina Adams and Karen Schulman

Children's Defense Fund

May 1998

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Overview

This report is a regional compilation of several state reports, each of which examines the range of child care challenges facing families in the state. As shown in this volume, as well as the volumes for the other three regions of the U.S., families in *every state* are struggling to find quality child care they can afford—yet face serious problems because costs are too high, they cannot find the quality they are looking for, or the demands of their work schedules limit their choices. There is no state in the country that has successfully addressed the full range of problems facing families who need child care.

The problems described in this series highlight the need for a significant new commitment to child care. Increased state and federal investments, and greater involvement from other sectors, are essential to make improvements possible. We cannot continue to jeopardize the success of working families and their children. Because of the urgency of these problems, the Children's Defense Fund and thousands of national, state, and local organizations and individuals are working together to improve the quality and affordability of child care and after-school activities for America's children and families. To learn more about these efforts, call (202) 662-3671 or visit CDF's website at www.childrensdefense.org.

While this series focuses on the child care problems facing families across the country, there are positive steps that states and communities are taking to address these issues. Many of these initiatives are described in other CDF child care publications, such as *State Developments in Child Care and Early Education 1997.* Yet despite these efforts, very serious challenges remain in every state, and much more must be done to help parents get the quality, affordable care they need to support their families.

Acknowledgments

We are grateful to the many individuals and organizations who helped on this project. They include the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA), who worked with us to survey selected state CCR&R agencies for information on child care costs, as well as on other issues. Our thanks go to key NACCRRA members and staff—including Diane Adams, Fran Kipnis, Kirsta Millar, Yasmina Vinci, Bobbie Weber, and Gail Wilson—as well as the many state and local child care resource and referral agency staff who took the time to answer the survey and verify the information. We are also grateful to state child care advocates across the country who helped to document the child care needs in their communities and provided input on drafts.

Other individuals and organizations provided invaluable assistance. These include Marcie Whitebook and Marci Andrews of the Center for the Child Care Workforce; Andrea Camp and staff of the Lifetime Television's child care initiative "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment"; and Beth Miller, Linda Sisson, and Barbara Taylor representing the school-age child care community.

Many CDF staff members and interns helped us with this project as well. They include Neelum Arya, Helen Blank, Anourack Chinyavong, Danielle Contreras, Diane Minor, Nicole Oxendine Poersch, Elizabeth Reynolds, Daniel Stein, and Kanya Williams. We would like to extend our particular appreciation to Jody Wright, whose work was essential to this project.

Finally, we also would like to thank the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the A.L. Mailman Foundation, and the Prudential Foundation, who provided support for this effort.

Copyright © 1998 Children's Defense Fund

CDF grants blanket permission to copy any portion of this document, waiving all other applicable copyright protection, if it is to be used in work for and on behalf of children. For all other uses, please contact the Managing Editor, CDF Publications, for permission to reprint.

THE SOUTH:

Child Care Challenges

- Alabama
- Arkansas
- Delaware
- Florida
- Georgia
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Maryland
- Mississippi
- North Carolina
- Oklahoma
- South Carolina
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Virginia
- West Virginia

Gina Adams and Karen Schulman

Children's Defense Fund
May 1998

ALABAMA:

CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Alabama parents.

- Every day, about 214,300 children younger than six are in child care in Alabama if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Alabama work to help support their families. An estimated 62 percent of Alabama mothers with children younger than six, and 73 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Alabama and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers didn't work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Alabama.

Child care is costly for many families in Alabama.

- Child care can easily cost more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Alabama in 1997 was $2,363[6]—slightly over two-thirds the average cost of child care for a four-year-old in a center in Birmingham.
- Many families in Alabama earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Alabama with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 411,930 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty or about $27,000 for a family of three).[7]
- In Alabama, average child care costs for an infant or preschooler are easily $3,000 to $4,000 per year. Child care is expensive for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. The average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in 1997 in Birmingham was $3,342, with fees as high as $9,620; and the average cost in Blount County was $2,934, with fees as high as $3,640.[8] These expenses are for only one child—parents with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Alabama[9]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Birmingham		Blount County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,833	$9,620	$3,293	$3,640
4 years	$3,342	$9,620	$2,934	$3,640
8 years[10]	$2,013	$3,594	$1,198	$2,097

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Birmingham		Blount County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,408	$7,020	$3,135	$3,510
4 years	$3,324	$7,020	$3,118	$3,510
8 years	$2,061	$2,995	$1,653	$2,097

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in Birmingham, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *34 percent* of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in Alabama are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Alabama has among the lowest income cutoffs for child care assistance in the country, ranking fourth from the bottom in making families eligible for assistance. The state only allows families with incomes below $17,330* for a family of three to be eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $30,400. *[Families already receiving assistance in Alabama can continue doing so until their annual income reaches $26,664.]
- Alabama's eligibility cutoff levels are lower than its neighbors—for example, while a low-income working family earning only $20,000 (about 150 percent of poverty) is not even *eligible* for assistance in Alabama, the same family would be eligible for help in Mississippi, Georgia, and Tennessee.[11]

Child care assistance helps
parents move from welfare to work

An Alabama mother shares her experience: "I am a single mother on welfare.... Since I have no experience and couldn't find a job for pay, I am now in the JOBS Prep Program. I am in the middle of on-the-job work experience. I have two little boys who are not school-age yet. I have no close family near where I live and I don't know what I would have done if the government didn't pay for child care for me. I hope to find a real paying job when I finish this program. I know that I will still need help with paying for my child care to be able to make it."[12]

- Even with Alabama's low income cutoff, many hard-working families who *are* eligible are unable to get child care assistance due to inadequate funding. In Alabama, 7,997 children (representing 5,215 families) are on the waiting list for child care assistance.[13] Research has shown that parents waiting for child care assistance are likely to face serious financial difficulties, have difficulty staying employed, go on welfare, and/or have serious concerns about the quality of their children's care.[14]
- The situation is likely to get worse in coming years, as more families are required to move from welfare to work. In a recent survey, Alabama reported that, without additional funds, it is not confident that it will be able to meet the demand for child care assistance generated by the increase in welfare work requirements.[15] Low-income working families who are not on welfare may end up losing assistance as more families on welfare need help.
- Alabama does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 18 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Alabama spent 202 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[16]

Child care assistance helps families remain self-sufficient

An Alabama mother receiving child care assistance states: "Child care is a great necessity in my life. My eight-month-old daughter attends a child care center and my eight-year-old son attends an after-school program. They receive excellent care and that gives me the comfort and the reassurance that I need to continue working and providing for us as a family. My biggest concern and worry is that I will only receive assistance for a short while and then I will have to pay all of it and that will put me in the financial bind of having to apply for food stamps and other assistance. I have worked so hard to get to this point and I don't want to backslide to that position again. I am grateful for the financial support I have received for my child care. Without it we would be on welfare struggling in a dark hole. Life is good when you are taking care of yourself and those you love."[17]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Alabama are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Alabama affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[18] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[19] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[20]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Alabama.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Alabama's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Alabama—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Alabama's children from harm.

- Alabama is one of the many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, the state did not meet recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for *any* of the six age groups examined.[21] It allowed one adult to take care of 20 four-year-olds with no other adults—although early childhood experts recommend no more than eight to 10. Alabama allows more four-year-olds per adult than most other states. With such large numbers of children per adult, it is extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.

Alabama families struggle to find affordable, quality care

A single mother in Alabama tells of her search for quality child care: "Quality, affordable child care is a must for our family. However, I have had to choose quality over affordability. When the cost of my child's daycare became too overwhelming, I decided to try a more affordable center. Although affordable, it was not better. The facility itself was nice and clean, the workers seemed nice and the program seemed to be a good one. However, too many children, too few workers led to not enough attention for my child. She was very unhappy so I decided to put other important things on hold to put her back into the original program.[22]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[23] Alabama is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[24] Alabama is also one of 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior training.[25]

- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[26] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Alabama was only $12,380 (only slightly above minimum wage)[27] and national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[28]

- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in Alabama. In Birmingham, for example, almost one in five family child care providers go out of business each year.[29] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[30]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Alabama.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in Alabama. In 1997, only about 43 of Alabama's 1,335 licensed child care centers (or 3 percent) were accredited.[31] More than half (24) of those accredited centers were in Birmingham. In many communities throughout the state, there are no accredited centers.[32]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Alabama face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Alabama school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Alabama families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 187,417 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Alabama live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[33]
- Alabama children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week.[34] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[35] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[36] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Alabama, only one in four public schools (1,274 or 24 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[37] Further evidence of the inadequacy of after-school options in Alabama was provided by a 1995 study of child care in selected cities across the U.S., which found shortages of school-age child care in Birmingham.[38]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Alabama.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[39] This means as many as 26,200 babies in Alabama are in child care if national patterns hold true.[40]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Alabama's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.

- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping very young children grow, Alabama allows a single caregiver in a child care center to care for *eight* 18-month-old toddlers. In comparison, early childhood educators recommend no more than three to five toddlers this age per adult.[41] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, diaper, play, and care for eight active 18-month-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency such as a fire.

- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Alabama to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. For example, child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Birmingham in 1997 averaged $3,833, but could cost as much as $9,620.[42]

Other families in Alabama face shortages of care as well—such as families needing care during nontraditional hours.

- Evening care is particularly hard to find in Birmingham, in part because the city passed zoning regulations three years ago that prohibit family or group day care homes from operating both during the day and the evenings (they can only be open 13 hours). Weekend care is also very scarce, with only 11 providers in a four-county area reporting weekend care.[43]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Alabama

Number of children younger than one[44]	58,135
Number of children younger than six[45]	357,108
Number of children ages six to 17[46]	719,328
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[47]	26,200
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[48]	214,300
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[49]	62%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[50]	73%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Alabama

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[51]	411,930
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Alabama[52]	$2,363

Annual Child Care Costs in Alabama[53]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Birmingham		Blount County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,833	$9,620	$3,293	$3,640
4 years	$3,342	$9,620	$2,934	$3,640
8 years[54]	$2,013	$3,594	$1,198	$2,097

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Birmingham		Blount County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,408	$7,020	$3,135	$3,510
4 years	$3,324	$7,020	$3,118	$3,510
8 years	$2,061	$2,995	$1,653	$2,097

Many Children in Alabama Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Alabama require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[55]	No
Does Alabama require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[56]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in Alabama in 1996[57]	$12,380
Annual turnover rate for family child care providers in Birmingham[58]	18%
Percentage of child care centers in Alabama that were accredited as of 1997[59]	3%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Alabama[60]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[61]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	6	3-4	No
18 months	8	3-5	No
27 months	8	4-6	No
3 years	12	7-10	No
4 years	20	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in Alabama

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[42]	1,335
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[43]	3,366
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[44]	24%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from Childcare Resources, Birmingham, AL; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[9] Information from Childcare Resources, Birmingham, AL; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[10] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[11] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[12] South Central Alabama Childcare Management Agency, *Book of Families* (Washington, DC: National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998).

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, *Valuing Families: The High Cost of Waiting for Child Care Sliding Fee Assistance* (Minneapolis, MN: 1995).

[15] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[16] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education*. (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[17] Children's Services, Inc., Anniston, AL, *Book of Families* (Washington, DC: National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998).

[18] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[19] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[20] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[21] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[22] Childcare Resources, Birmingham, AL, *Book of Families* (Washington, DC: National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998).

[23] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools (October 16, 1997).

[24] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[25] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[26] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[27] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[28] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[29] Information from Childcare Resources, Birmingham, AL; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[30] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[31] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[32] Information from Childcare Resources, Birmingham, AL; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[33] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[34] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[35] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[36] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[37] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[38] Clark and Long, *Child Care Prices: A Profile of Six Communities—Final Report* (Washington, DC: The Urban Institute, 1995), p. 72.

[39] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[40] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[41] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[42] Information from Childcare Resources, Birmingham, AL; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[43] Information from Childcare Resources, Birmingham, AL; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[44] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[45] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[46] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[47] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[48] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[49] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[50] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[51] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995*. Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[52] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[53] Information from Childcare Resources, Birmingham, AL; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[54] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[55] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing*. (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[56] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing*. (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[57] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[58] Information from Childcare Resources, Birmingham, AL; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[59] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs. Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[60] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[61] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[62] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[63] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC

[64] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ARKANSAS:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Arkansas parents.

- Every day, about 127,000 children younger than six are in cared for by someone other than their parents in Arkansas if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day in some form of child care.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Arkansas work to help support their families. An estimated 63 percent of Arkansas mothers with children younger than six, and 75 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Arkansas and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Arkansas.

Child care is costly for many families in Arkansas.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Arkansas in 1997 was $2,255[6]—less than three-fifths the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Fayetteville, Rogers, and Bentonville.
- Many families in Arkansas earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Arkansas with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 246,330 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[7]
- In Arkansas, child care can easily cost $3,000 to $5,000 a year for one child. It is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. The average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Fayetteville, Rogers, and Bentonville was $3,900, with fees as high as $5,460, and the average cost in the state's rural counties was $3,120, with fees as high as $4,420.[8] These expenses are for only one child—parents with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Arkansas[9]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Fayetteville, Rogers, Bentonville		Arkansas' rural counties	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,420	$6,240	$3,640	$5,200
4 years	$3,900	$5,460	$3,120	$4,420
8 years[10]	$2,396	$5,990	$2,396	$4,193

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Fayetteville, Rogers, Bentonville		Arkansas' rural counties	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,420	$5,460	$3,900	$5,200
4 years	$3,380	$5,200	$3,120	$5,200
8 years	$2,396	$5,990	$2,396	$4,193

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year old in a child care center at the average price in Fayetteville, Rogers, and Bentonville, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *39 percent* of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in Arkansas are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Arkansas ranks among the bottom ten states in making low-income families eligible for child care assistance. As of January 1998, 40 states allowed families with higher incomes to receive state subsidies. In Arkansas, only those working families with incomes below $18,400 (for a family of three) are eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $27,500.[11]

- Arkansas' eligibility cutoff is lower than a number of many of its neighbors' cutoffs. While a low-income working family earning only $20,000 (about 150 percent of poverty) is not even *eligible* for assistance in Arkansas, the same family would be eligible for help in Oklahoma, Louisiana, and Mississippi.[12]

- Even with the state's low income cutoff, one-third of Arkansas' counties place families eligible to receive child care assistance on waiting lists due to inadequate funds.[13] Research has shown that parents waiting for child care assistance are likely to face serious financial difficulties, have difficulty staying employed, go on welfare, and/or to have serious concerns about the quality of their children's care because they cannot afford higher quality care.

- Arkansas' waiting lists may actually underestimate the number of eligible families who are not getting served, since the state reports that some eligible families may not even know they can get child care assistance.[14]

- The situation could become worse in coming years as more families required to move from welfare to work need child care. In a recent survey, Arkansas reported that, without additional funds, the state is not confident that it will be able to meet the demand for child care assistance generated by the increase in welfare work requirements.[15]

- Arkansas does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care their children need. The state spent only 35 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Arkansas spent 66 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[16]

Families receiving child care assistance face limited options due to low state rates

In some communities in Arkansas, even those families receiving child care assistance may not have sufficient options because the state payment rates are too low. Arkansas resident Walter Quinn, owner of Kidco Child Care & Preschool, reports, "I don't take (child care subsidy) vouchers because the state pays the average amount (of child care rates) and not the market rates for child care." Quinn charges parents $70 - $100 a week for infants and toddlers. The state pays a maximum of $70.[17]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Arkansas are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Arkansas affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[18] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[19] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[20]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Arkansas.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Arkansas' children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Arkansas—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Arkansas' children from harm.

- Arkansas is one of the many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, the state did not meet recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for *any* of the six age groups examined.[21] The state allowed one caregiver to care for as many as 12 three-year-olds or 15 four-year-olds without help, although early childhood experts recommend no more than eight to 10. This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[22] Arkansas is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[23] Arkansas is also one of 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior training.[24]

- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[25] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Arkansas was only $11,020 (only slightly above minimum wage)[26] and national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[27]

- In Arkansas, the workers caring for animals at kennels earn on average $1.29 more per hour than those looking after children in child care, according to state Employment Security Commission statistics.[28]

- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. The Arkansas Department of Human Services Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Development estimates that each year 40 percent of all child care workers quit their jobs for higher paying positions in other fields.[29] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[30]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Arkansas.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in Arkansas. In 1997, only about 44 of Arkansas' 1,855 licensed child care centers (or 2 percent) were accredited.[31]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Arkansas face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Arkansas school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Arkansas families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 108,558 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Arkansas live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[32]

- Arkansas children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[33] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[34] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of

problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[35] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.

- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Arkansas, only about one in ten public schools (1,084 or 12 percent) of the public schools offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[36]
- According to the Northwest Arkansas Resource and Referral Center, which helps families find child care, there are shortages of school-age care throughout the state.[37]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Arkansas.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[38] This means as many as 15,500 babies in Arkansas are in child care if national patterns hold true.[39]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Arkansas' young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping very young children grow, Arkansas allows a single caregiver to care for nine 18-month-old toddlers. In contrast, early childhood experts recommend no more than three to five toddlers this age per adult.[40] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, diaper, play, and care for *nine* active 18-month-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency.
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Arkansas to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. For example, child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Fayetteville, Rogers, and Bentonville averaged $4,420 in 1997, but could cost as much as $6,240.[41]
- There is a serious shortage of infant care throughout the state, according to the Northwest Arkansas Resource and Referral Center. Infant care is especially difficult to find in Carroll, Benton, Washington, and Madison Counties, where parents looking for care for their young children face long waiting lists.[42]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Arkansas

Number of children younger than one[43]	34,337
Number of children younger than six[44]	211,610
Number of children ages six to 17[45]	447,838
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[46]	15,500
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[47]	127,000
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[48]	63%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[49]	75%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Arkansas

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[50]	246,330
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Arkansas[51]	$2,255

Annual Child Care Costs in Arkansas[52]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Fayetteville, Rogers, Bentonville		Arkansas' rural counties	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,420	$6,240	$3,640	$5,200
4 years	$3,900	$5,460	$3,120	$4,420
8 years[53]	$2,396	$5,990	$2,396	$4,193

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Fayetteville, Rogers, Bentonville		Arkansas' rural counties	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,420	$5,460	$3,900	$5,200
4 years	$3,380	$5,200	$3,120	$5,200
8 years	$2,396	$5,990	$2,396	$4,193

Many Children in Arkansas Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Arkansas require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[54]	No
Does Arkansas require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[55]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in Arkansas in 1996[56]	$11,020
Annual turnover rate for child care workers in Arkansas[57]	40%
Percentage of child care centers in Arkansas that were accredited as of 1997[58]	2%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Arkansas[59]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[60]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	6	3-4	No
18 months	9	3-5	No
27 months	12	4-6	No
3 years	12	7-10	No
4 years	15	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in Arkansas

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[41]	1,855
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[42]	50
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[43]	1,295
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[44]	12%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from Northwest Arkansas Child Care Resource and Referral Center, Springdale, AR; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[9] Information from Northwest Arkansas Child Care Resource and Referral Center, Springdale, AR; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[10] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[11] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[15] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[16] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[17] Kondo, "Day-care workers, stay-home parents say Clinton proposal won't help them," Little Rock, AR: *The Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, January 27, 1998, p. B1.

[18] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[19] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[20] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[21] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[22] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools (October 16, 1997).

[23] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[24] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[25] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[26] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[27] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[28] Kondo, "Day-care workers, stay-home parents say Clinton proposal won't help them," Little Rock, AR: *The Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, January 27, 1998, p. B1.

[29] Kondo, "Day-care workers, stay-home parents say Clinton proposal won't help them," Little Rock, AR: *The Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, January 27, 1998, p. B1.

[30] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[31] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[32] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[33] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[34] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[35] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[36] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[37] Information from Northwest Arkansas Child Care Resource and Referral Center, Springdale, AR; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[38] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[39] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[40] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, MA.

[41] Information from Northwest Arkansas Child Care Resource and Referral Center, Springdale, AR; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[42] Information from Northwest Arkansas Child Care Resource and Referral Center, Springdale, AR; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[43] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[44] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[45] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[46] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[47] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[48] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[49] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by CDF.

[50] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[51] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[52] Information from Northwest Arkansas Child Care Resource and Referral Center, Springdale, AR; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[53] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[54] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing*. (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[55] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing*. (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[56] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[57] Kondo. "Day-care workers, stay-home parents say Clinton proposal won't help them," Little Rock, AR: *The Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, January 27, 1998, p. B1.

[58] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm, and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[59] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[60] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[61] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[62] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[63] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[64] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

DELAWARE:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Delaware parents.

- Every day, about 36,100 children younger than six are in child care in Delaware if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- A recent Delaware report estimates that about 40,000 Delaware preschool and school-age children (ages 0-12) currently need but do not have child care. There are approximately 37,000 children in licensed or legally operating child care programs, with an additional 12,000 cared for by relatives or caregivers in the children's own home. Based on 1990 census data projections, it is estimated that approximately 90,000 preschool and school-age children currently need some type of child care during all or part of the year.[2]
- Most mothers in Delaware work to help support their families. An estimated 66 percent of Delaware mothers with children younger than six, and 81 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[3]
- For many mothers in Delaware and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[4] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[5] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[6]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Delaware.

Child care is costly for many families in Delaware.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Delaware in 1997 was $4,180[7]—less than the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center and three-quarters the average cost for an infant in a center.
- Many families in Delaware earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Delaware with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 47,610 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below about $27,000 for a family of three or 200 percent of poverty).[8]

Annual Cost of Child Care in Delaware[9]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Wilmington		Sussex County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$5,492	$9,880	$5,782	$9,880	$4,321	$5,460
4 years	$4,531	$9,360	$4,871	$9,360	$3,636	$4,836
8 years[10]	$3,618	$7,188	$3,295	$4,193	$2,755	$3,115

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Wilmington		Sussex County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,375	$9,100	$4,349	$8,372	$3,565	$5,200
4 years	$4,075	$9,100	$3,983	$6,500	$3,331	$4,940
8 years	$3,546	n.a.	$3,929	$5,990	$3,019	n.a.

- In Delaware, child care for a four-year-old in a child care center cost an average of $4,531 in 1997. Child care is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. The average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Wilmington was $4,871, with fees as high as $9,360, and the average annual cost in Sussex County was $3,636, with fees as high as $4,836.[11] These expenses are for only one child—parents with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year old in a child care center at the average price in Delaware, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *47 percent*—almost half—of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in Delaware are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Delaware ranked in the bottom third of all states as far as making low-income families eligible for child care assistance. In January 1998, the state only allowed low-income working families earning less than $20,664 (for a family of three) to be eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $38,927.[12] Delaware's cutoff is lower than that in a number of nearby states, including Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Virginia.

- The situation is likely to get worse in coming years, as more families are required to move from welfare to work under Delaware's A Better Chance program. In a recent survey, Delaware reported that, without additional funds, it is not confident that it will be able to meet the demand for child care assistance generated by the increase in welfare work requirements.[13]

- Furthermore, the competition for the limited number of child care spaces available to children receiving subsidized care will grow stiffer as more families move from welfare to work. The state estimates that an additional 1,300 children will enter state-subsidized care annually through the end of the decade. While state officials believe sufficient slots are available for the total of 8,375 children who need assistance *this* year, it is not clear that their families can find the kind of care they want for their children.[14]

- Delaware does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 38 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Delaware spent 75 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[15]

Even those low-income Delaware families that are fortunate enough to receive assistance still face financial hardship and limited options due to inadequate state policies.

- Families receiving child care assistance in Delaware continue to shoulder a huge financial burden, as the state requires one of the highest family copayment levels in the country. As of January 1998, a family of three earning only $19,995 a year (or $1,670 a month) receiving child care help could still be required to pay as much as 15 percent of their income—or $242 a month—in family copayments. This fee is 50 percent higher than the amount experts recommend, and is significantly more than families at the same income level would have to pay in most other states, including neighboring states such as New Jersey and Pennsylvania.[16]
- Families in Delaware who receive child care assistance still face enormous difficulties finding providers who will take care of their children, as the amount the state will pay for care is significantly below market prices. In January 1998, the maximum amount the state would pay for a four-year old in a center was more than *$200* a month below the rate needed for parents to be able to have a sufficient choice of providers.[17] As a consequence, providers either have to ask parents to make up the difference (*in addition* to the very high parent fees required by the state), or refuse to take care of children receiving help from the state. In contrast, a number of other states pay at levels based on current market prices.

Low state reimbursement rates seriously limit parent choice...

Vivian Miller of New Castle began her day care search for "more than just a baby-sitter" when her daughter, Neshia, was an infant. While Miller found places she liked, she had trouble finding a provider willing to take Neshia either because they would not take subsidies or they already had filled the slots they keep for children on subsidies.[18]

....and make it difficult for centers to survive

After September, the innovative Southbridge Children's Center in Wilmington had to start searching for private funding to supplement the state child care reimbursement, which covers only about half the weekly $205-per-child cost of providing care at the center. This model program is housed in two renovated public housing units at 1100-1102 D Street, and is a first-of-its-kind effort in Delaware to provide care for infants and toddlers whose parents must work due to welfare reform.[19]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Delaware are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Delaware affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[20] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[21] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[22]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Delaware.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Delaware's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Delaware—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Delaware's children from harm.
- Delaware is one of many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, the state met recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for only two of the six age groups examined.[23] Delaware allowed a caregiver in a child care center to care for as many as 12 three-year-olds or 15 four-year-olds alone, although early childhood experts recommend no more than seven to ten children—only 10 states allow more.[24] Having too many children per adult makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.
- Periodic inspections by licensing staff are one of the most important ways to ensure the safety and well-being of children in licensed child care programs, as inspections allow licensers to detect and deter unsafe situations. Yet Delaware does not have enough licensing inspectors to visit each licensed care provider annually. For example, family child care homes may be visited only every five years, even though small homes are responsible for two-thirds of the health, safety and administrative violations recorded by the state.[25]
- While the number of child care providers has more than doubled since 1988, the staffing in the Office of Child Care Licensing has not increased proportionately. Consequently, inspectors carry large caseloads, with each licensing worker being responsible for 235 facilities—although experts recommend no more than one worker for 100 to 150.[26]
- A three-month investigation in Delaware by *The News-Journal*, which examined 35,000 records, found that inspectors rarely conduct surprise visits—which experts suggest doing annually to weed out unsafe operations. By comparison, state health inspectors make annual surprise visits to every nursing home, restaurant and even hot dog stand.[27]
- Licensing inspections can help protect children. For example, between January 1995 and March 1997, Delaware state inspectors found violations of safety, health and administrative codes in more than half the facilities they visited. Some of these violations put children in potential peril. For example, buildings, grounds and equipment were unsafe, hazardous materials were within reach, and unsanitary practices were used.[28]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[29] most states do not require family child care providers to have any early childhood training prior to taking care of children. When such requirements do exist, they are usually minimal—Delaware only requires these providers to have 15 hours of training within the first year of receiving a license.[30]
- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[31] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Delaware was only $13,640.[32] In addition, national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[33]
- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in Delaware. On average, one out of every five family child care homes goes out of business each year, with rates as high as one out of four in Wilmington, and one out of three in Sussex County.[34] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[35]

Low wages make it difficult for good providers to stay in business

Regina Ringgold used to be a child care provider in one of Wilmington's lower-income neighborhoods, where her child care home on Pine Street met high standards. She led a provider support group and served as treasurer of a statewide association. State licensing officials thought so highly of her they hired her to teach other providers how to improve their child care businesses. For 10 years she made it work—but last January, she gave it up to manage offices in MBNA's consumer lending department. Some parents couldn't pay her on time and she decided if she couldn't offer a quality program with educational experiences and nutritious food, she wouldn't offer a program at all. "Child care, regardless of what people say, is not a money-making business, especially for people who value our children and take their business as a career," Ringgold said. "Financially I (couldn't) continue to help people and not take care of myself."[36]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Delaware.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in Delaware. As of December, 1997, the Family and Workplace Connection reported that only 11 percent of the operating licensed child care centers in the state were accredited.[37] Families in some communities have little access to accredited care—there is only one accredited program in Wilmington out of 37 licensed operating child care centers,[38] and only one accredited child care center in Sussex County out of 50 licensed operating child care centers.[39]

Good programs help Delaware children grow and thrive—yet are hard for many families to find

In Delaware, St. David's Episcopal Day School is an example of excellence. The program in Brandywine Hundred is one of the relatively few child care programs statewide that runs a nationally accredited, violation-free program. Recently, three giggling little boys splashed their hands through a pond stocked with plastic frogs, lizards and fish in the rain forest classroom. Next door, four-year-olds painted ducks and pigs, while around the corner, kindergartners tried to clean up a makeshift oil spill. In the auditorium, children dashed around an obstacle course as the aroma of fish sticks drifted in from the kitchen. With about 100 children ages three to five enrolled, the program on Grubb Road is actually a school, with classrooms for different development levels. All 12 teachers have college degrees—they are paid $12 to $18 an hour, have a pension plan and get medical benefits. Not surprisingly, turnover rates are low—most have been there six years. The school, licensed since 1972, has a squeaky-clean record. Annual inspections for license renewal have not found any violations in recent years, nor has the state licensing office received any complaints. Parents are pleased. For years, there has been a waiting list to get into the school, whose $135 a week price tag is on the high end of rates.[40]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Delaware face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

Many families in Delaware have trouble finding good child care in their communities.

- In Delaware, agencies that help families find child care report that there is a serious shortage of various kinds of care—including infant care, school-age care, care for children with special needs, care for children who are mildly ill, and care for families who work during nontraditional hours.[41]
- Certain regions in Delaware have general shortages of child care. For instance, in the Bear area of New Castle County there are only six child care centers,[42] in Kent County there is a need for family child care homes,[43] and in rural Sussex County there is a limited supply of child care overall.[44]

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Delaware school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Delaware families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 18,234 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Delaware live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[45]
- Delaware children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[46] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[47] However,

studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[48] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.

- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Delaware, for example, only one out of five public schools (169 or 20 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[49]

- There are only 8,900 before- and after-school care slots in legally operating day care facilities in Delaware, although there are an estimated 74,600 school-age children with working parents.[50]

Delaware parents need constructive after-school activities for their teenage children

A single mother from Wilmington contacted the local resource and referral organization that helps families find child care—The Family and Workplace Connection—saying she urgently needed after-school care for her 14-year-old son because he was beginning to get into trouble being home alone in the after-school hours by inviting other children over, "partying," etc. She needed some type of after-school supervision as quickly as possible. Most child care programs in Wilmington do not take school-age children over the age of 12 or 13, although the agency was able to find a program that could help this mother.[51]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Delaware.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[52] This means as many as 4,500 babies in Delaware are in child care if national patterns hold true.[53]

- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Delaware's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.

- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping very young children grow, Delaware allows a single caregiver to care for seven 18-month-old toddlers. Only eight states allow more children this age per adult.[54] Early childhood experts recommend that a single caregiver be responsible for no more than three to five toddlers this age.[55] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, diaper, play, and care for seven active 18-month-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency.

- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Delaware to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Delaware in 1997 averaged $5,492, but could cost as much as $9,880.[56]

- Many families with very young children struggle to find care. Despite the growing number of young families in Bear, there are few day care centers and limited infant care options of any type. Only two of Bear's six centers take infants. While 84 of the 103 family child care homes take infants, few vacancies for infants exist for children this age.[57] Local experts also report shortages of infant care in other communities, including North Wilmington.[58]

Other families in Delaware face shortages of care as well—such as families where the children have special needs or the parents work nontraditional hours.

- Families have limited options in Middletown, and particularly limited options if their jobs don't end until 5:30 or later. There are no child care centers in town, and only 45 family child care homes. Only one-quarter (12) of these homes are open past 5:30 p.m. and only *three* are open past 6 p.m.[59]
- Many Delaware communities—including North Wilmington and the Middletown/Bear area—report shortages of care during nontraditional hours. Evening and weekend care can be especially hard to find. For example, evening care is scarce in North Wilmington, Hockessin, Stanton, and Ogletown. In Kent County, only three centers are open until 9 p.m. or later, and none are open on weekends. In Sussex County, only two child care centers are open until at least 9 p.m., and only two offer some weekend care.[60]
- There are shortages of other types of care as well—for example, North Wilmington and Middletown/Bear both report shortages of care for mildly ill children.[61]

Families who have school-age children with special needs face particular challenges finding affordable child care

Delaware's Family and Workplace Connection reports of a client with two children who was referred through A Better Chance (ABC, the state's welfare-to-work program). In addition to a nine-year-old, she has a seven-year-old son who is developmentally delayed—he has limited speech and is in diapers. The client does not have a car and her son does not behave well on public transportation. At first, the client lived near Kirkwood Highway, but now has moved into the city, and her needs have changed from needing care before- and after-school to needing evening care. The staff of the Family and Workplace Connection has found very few child care options for this mother.[62]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Delaware

Number of children younger than one[63]	9,902
Number of children younger than six[64]	60,209
Number of children ages six to 17[65]	115,806
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[66]	4,500
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[67]	36,100
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[68]	66%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[69]	81%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Delaware

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[70]	47,610
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Delaware[71]	$4,180

Annual Child Care Costs in Delaware[72]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Wilmington		Sussex County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$5,492	$9,880	$5,782	$9,880	$4,321	$5,460
4 years	$4,531	$9,360	$4,871	$9,360	$3,636	$4,836
8 years[73]	$3,618	$7,188	$3,295	$4,193	$2,755	$3,115

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Wilmington		Sussex County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,375	$9,100	$4,349	$8,372	$3,565	$5,200
4 years	$4,075	$9,100	$3,983	$6,500	$3,331	$4,940
8 years	$3,546	n.a.	$3,929	$5,990	$3,019	n.a.

Many Children in Delaware Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Delaware require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children? [74]	Yes
Does Delaware require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children? [75]	Yes
Average salary for a child care worker in Delaware in 1996[76]	$13,640
Annual turnover rate for family child care providers in Delaware[77]	20%
Percentage of child care centers in Delaware that were accredited as of 1997[78]	11%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Delaware[79]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[80]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	7	3-5	No
27 months	10	4-6	No
3 years	12	7-10	No
4 years	15	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in Delaware

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[81]	246
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[82]	45
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[83]	1,931
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[84]	20%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Early Care and Education Consortium, *Delaware's Children Are Everyone's Responsibility* (Wilmington, DE: Early Care and Education Consortium, Summer 1996), p. 4.

[3] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[4] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[5] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[6] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[7] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[8] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[9] Information from The Family and Workplace Connection, Wilmington, DE; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[10] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[11] Information from The Family and Workplace Connection, Wilmington, DE; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Barrish and Tiedge, "Parents in transition face another challenge," Wilmington, DE: *The News Journal*, June 10, 1997.

[15] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[16] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[17] Proposed HHS regulations suggest that a state's maximum rate should be set at the 75th percentile of the current local market rate to ensure families access to care. This rate enables a parent to afford the rates charged by three-quarters of local providers.

[18] Barrish and Tiedge, "Parents in transition face another challenge," Wilmington, DE: *The News Journal*, June 10, 1997.

[19] "Free day care gives parents a chance to leave welfare behind," Wilmington, DE: *The News Journal*, December 16, 97, p. A16.

[20] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[21] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[22] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[23] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[24] Barrish and Tiedge, "Delaware near bottom in some regulations," Wilmington, DE: *Sunday News Journal*, June 8, 1997, p. A-6.

[25] Barrish and Tiedge, "System puts kids at risk," Wilmington, DE: *Sunday News Journal*, June 8, 1997, p. A-1.

[26] Early Care and Education Consortium, *Delaware's Children Are Everyone's Responsibility* (Wilmington, DE: Summer 1996), p. 6.

[27] Barrish and Tiedge, "System puts kids at risk," Wilmington, DE: *Sunday News Journal*, June 8, 1997, p. A-1.

[28] Barrish and Tiedge, "System puts kids at risk," Wilmington, DE: *Sunday News Journal*, June 8, 1997, p. A-16.

[29] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools. (October 16, 1997).

[30] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[31] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[32] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[33] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[34] Information from The Family and Workplace Connection, Wilmington, DE; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[35] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[36] Barrish and Tiedge, "Care costs too much, pays too little," Wilmington, DE: *The News Journal*, June 9, 1997.

[37] Information from The Family and Workplace Connection, Wilmington, DE; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[38] Information from The Family and Workplace Connection, Wilmington, DE; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[39] Early Care and Education Consortium, *Delaware's Children Are Everyone's Responsibility* (Wilmington, DE: Early Care and Education Consortium, Summer 1996), executive summary.

[40] Barrish and Tiedge, "Quality: Good care can be found, at a high price," Wilmington, DE: *The News Journal*, June 10, 1997.

[41] The Family and Workplace Connection, "Fact Sheet" (Wilmington, DE: The Family and Workplace Connection, December 1997).

[42] Information from The Family and Workplace Connection, Wilmington, DE; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[43] Early Care and Education Consortium, *Delaware's Children Are Everyone's Responsibility* (Wilmington, DE: Early Care and Education Consortium, Summer 1996), p. 4.

[44] The Family and Workplace Connection, "Fact Sheet" (Wilmington, DE: The Family and Workplace Connection, December 1997).

[45] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[46] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[47] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[48] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[49] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[50] Barrish and Tiedge, "Finding care for certain ages, odd hours especially difficult," Wilmington, DE: *The News Journal*, June 10, 1997.

[51] The Family and Workplace Connection, "Fact Sheet" (Wilmington, DE: The Family and Workplace Connection, December 1997).

[52] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[53] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[54] Barrish and Tiedge, "Delaware near bottom in some regulations," Wilmington, DE: *Sunday News Journal*, June 8, 1997, p. A-6.

[55] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[56] Information from The Family and Workplace Connection, Wilmington, DE; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[57] Barrish and Tiedge, "Finding care for certain ages, odd hours especially difficult," Wilmington, DE: *The News Journal*, June 10, 1997.

[58] Information from The Family and Workplace Connection, Wilmington, DE; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[59] Barrish and Tiedge, "Finding care for certain ages, odd hours especially difficult," Wilmington, DE: *The News Journal*, June 10, 1997.

[60] Barrish and Tiedge, "Finding care for certain ages, odd hours especially difficult," Wilmington, DE: *The News Journal*, June 10, 1997.

[61] Information from The Family and Workplace Connection, Wilmington, DE; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[62] Information from The Family and Workplace Connection, Wilmington, DE; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[63] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[64] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[65] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[66] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[67] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[68] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[69] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[70] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense

Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[71] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[72] Information from The Family and Workplace Connection, Wilmington, DE; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[73] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[74] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[75] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[76] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[77] Information from The Family and Workplace Connection, Wilmington, DE; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[78] Information from The Family and Workplace Connection, Wilmington, DE; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[79] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[80] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[81] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[82] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[83] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[84] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

FLORIDA:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Florida parents.

- Every day, about 696,100 children younger than six are in child care in Florida if national patterns hold true.* This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age. *[This includes the children of working parents and non-working parents, children cared for by relatives and non-relatives, and children cared for outside the home and within their own homes.]
- Most mothers in Florida work to help support their families. An estimated 63 percent of Florida mothers with children younger than six, and 77 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Florida and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Florida.

Child care is costly for many families in Florida.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Florida in 1997 was $1,789[6]—less than half the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center.
- Many families in Florida earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Florida with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year, and there are about 1,257,870 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[7]
- In Florida, child care for one four-year-old in a child care center cost $3,813 on average in 1997. Child care is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. The average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Florida's urban counties was $3,844, with fees as high as $5,629, and the average cost in rural areas was $3,496, with fees as high as $5,184.[8] These expenses are for only one child—families with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Florida[9]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Florida's urban counties		Florida's rural counties	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,762	$6,289	$4,387	$6,289	$3,825	$5,348
4 years	$3,813	$5,629	$3,844	$5,629	$3,496	$5,184

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year old in a child care center at the average price in Florida, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *40 percent* of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in Florida are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Florida ranks among the bottom third of all states in making low-income families eligible for child care assistance—as of January 1998, 36 states allowed families with higher incomes to receive state subsidies. Florida only allows families with incomes below $19,995* (for a family of three) to be eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to about $31,900.[10] This cutoff is lower than that in a number of southern states, including Louisiana, Georgia, and Mississippi. *[Florida families who are already receiving assistance can continue to do so until their income reaches about $26,660, but families cannot *initially* qualify if their incomes are at this level.]
- Even with Florida's low income cutoff, many hard-working families who *are* eligible are unable to get child care assistance due to inadequate funding. A recent survey found that 25,000 children were on the waiting list for child care assistance in Florida as of September 1997. The state had to freeze intake for low-income working families who were not on welfare (other than those at risk for abuse or neglect).[11] Research has shown that low-income parents waiting for child care assistance are likely to face serious financial difficulties, have difficulty staying employed, go on welfare, and/or have serious concerns about the quality of their children's care because they cannot afford better care.[12]
- Waiting lists for child care assistance affected children across the state:
  - ⇒ Fifteen of the 25 Child Care Coordinating agencies across the state were forced to freeze admissions for low-income working families who were not on welfare.[13]
  - ⇒ More than 5,000 children were on the waiting list in Miami-Dade, and about 1,054 were on the waiting list in Broward. Family Central—the agency responsible for finding care for children in Broward and North Miami-Dade—had not placed a child from the waiting list since the fall of 1996.[14]
  - ⇒ In the three counties covered by Florida's 4C agencies, (Orange, Osceola and Seminole Counties), there were 3,697 children on waiting lists in September for child care for low-income working families.[15]

The 25,000 low-income working families on waiting lists in Florida struggle every day to work and keep their children safe: Voices of Florida parents waiting for assistance

A Florida mother waiting for assistance reports: "I have been using my grocery money to pay for child care. I am taking home leftovers from the church dinners, and I'm praying that will be enough to get through the month. I literally have no money for food if I pay the preschool. I had to give away my son's cats because I could not feed them. ...I got sick and could not work for a week and a half. Now I only have half of my rent money because I ran out of my sick leave. I have a college degree, and I can't even support one child on what I make. All I need for child care is $35 a week. But, it might as well be $100, because I just don't have it. I'm collecting cans so I can have the money to get my son a Christmas present from Santa. I am as poor as I will ever be. I don't have anywhere to turn to get help, except for Children's Services Center—and I'm still waiting."[16]

* * * * * * *

Another Florida mother waiting for child care help says: "I have two children and their child care costs me $120 per week. I work a full-time job, but after I pay taxes and insurance I bring home $230 a week. That leaves me $110 a week to take care of my children. It is almost impossible for me to survive. I make too much money to receive food stamps so my children have to go hungry in order for us to get by. If I had some help with child care, I would have more money to buy food for my children. I have worked at my job for seven and a half years.... it breaks my heart to see my children suffer because I cannot afford child care."[17]

- In Florida, a perverse, if unintended, incentive was set up for families to go on welfare in order to obtain child care assistance. As one of the mothers on the child care waiting list in Pensacola said with some bewilderment, "I am considered low priority due to the fact that I work and have never been on welfare. How can this be?"[18]
- The Florida legislature plans to provide additional funds to serve many of the children currently on the waiting list for child care assistance. Despite the increased investment, however, the state will still only be able to serve about half the estimated 39,500 children from low-income families who need help paying for child care.[19]
- Families who are fortunate enough to get child care assistance in Florida are unlikely to be able to access high quality care. A resource and referral agency in the state reports that the child care subsidy reimbursement rate in its community is $3,750 per year—too low to purchase accredited care, which averages $5,000 per year.[20]
- Florida does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 74 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Florida spent 23 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[21] Since 1994, the state has increased its funding for child care and early education, but further investments are needed to ensure that low-income families have access to quality child care.

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Florida are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Florida affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[22] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[23] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[24]
- Over one-quarter of the children who enter kindergarten in Florida are not fully prepared for school, according to the results of assessment tests.[25]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Florida.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Florida's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Florida—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Florida's children from harm.
- Florida is one of many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, Florida met recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for only *two* of the six age groups examined.[26] For example, the state allowed a caregiver to care for as many as 15 three-year-olds or 20 four-year-olds alone, although early childhood experts recommend no more than seven to 10. This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[27] Florida is one of the few states that requires child care staff to have any early childhood training prior to taking care of children.[28]
- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[29] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Florida was only $13,560,[30] and national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[31]
- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care staff in Florida. For example, a recent study by the Families and Work Institute examined 150 Florida centers, and found that the annual turnover rates for teachers in these child care centers was 30 percent in 1996,[32] and other data suggest that overall turnover rates in the state (for providers in centers and family child care

homes) average about 40 percent.[33] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[34]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Florida.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs. Yet, while the number of accredited programs in Florida has been increasing, still only about 475 of the state's 5,742 licensed child care centers (8 percent) are accredited.[35]
- A recent study found that the quality of child care in Florida improved following changes in 1992 which required that there be fewer children per staff member in child care centers and more training for teachers. The study by the Families and Work Institute of 150 child care centers in four counties—Broward, Hillsborough, Pinellas, and Duval—found that children are more proficient in language, have fewer behavior problems, and are more securely attached to their caregivers. Teachers are more responsive to the children and are less likely to respond to a child's misbehavior by yelling, scolding or hitting.[36]

Quality child care makes a difference for Florida's children

Tammy McLamore, who works for $6.25 an hour as a reservation clerk for a transportation company in Fort Lauderdale, has watched the youngest of her five children, shy, three-year-old Katie, blossom this fall. The reason: she began attending the highly regarded Jack and Jill Nursery School on a scholarship provided by the school. Last year, her mother says, Katie spent her days stuck in a babysitter's crowded apartment in front of a television with five or six other children. At 7 a.m. one recent morning, Katie was eagerly boarding the school bus. "They sing and dance," Ms. McLamore said. "They do activities. Katie talks about all the teachers. She comes home from school and says, 'Want me to teach you a song?'"[37]

- Despite recent progress, the quality of care in Florida continues to be of great concern. The Families and Work study found that only two out of five children were in day care facilities that provided quality learning programs, salaries continued to be low, and turnover rates were high—only two percent of teachers observed in 1992 were still working in the same program four years later, and 83 percent of the teachers were paid less than $14,000 a year in 1994.[38]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Florida face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Florida school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Florida families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 499,148 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Florida live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[39]

- Florida children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[40] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[41] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[42] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.

- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Florida, less than half of the public schools (2,348 or 47 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[43]

Florida families with school-age children are struggling

A mother with school-age children tells of the challenges she faces: "It is very hard for one to find after-school arrangements for my two daughters, ages four and seven. I am a secretary and have a very limited income. Between me, their father, and their grandmother, we all take part in picking them up from school and take them to their grandfather who cannot drive. I am in desperate need of after-school care assistance. I am not sure how long we can continue to leave our jobs during our lunch breaks. I need quality after-school care for my daughters."[44]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Florida.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[45] This means as many as 82,900 babies in Florida are in child care if national patterns hold true.[46]

- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Florida's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.

- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping very young children grow, Florida allows a single caregiver to care for 11 two-year-olds (age 27 months) in child care centers. In contrast, early childhood experts recommend no more than four to six toddlers this age per adult.[47] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, play, feed, read to, and care for 11 active two-year-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency such as a fire.

- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Florida to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Florida in 1997 averaged $4,762, but could cost as much as $6,289.[48]

- Parents of very young children in Florida have the most difficulty finding care. Although more parents call their local child care resource and referral agencies requesting information about care for infants than for any other age group, 58 percent of the centers and 18 percent of the family child care homes do not provide infant care.[49]

- While the shortage of infant care affects all parents with young children, it is likely to make it particularly difficult for families struggling to get off welfare—more than 40 percent of Florida's WAGES participants are estimated to have children under three.[50]

Other parents in Florida face shortages of care as well—such as those working nontraditional hours and those trying to get off welfare.

- Many Florida families seeking care during nontraditional hours face difficulties. Only about 6 percent of Dade County's family child care homes provide care in the evenings, and an even smaller percentage offer overnight or weekend care. In Dade, Duval, Orange and Palm Beach and Pinellas, no more than one out of 20 centers provides care during evening, weekend, or overnight hours.[51]
- The shortage of child care is likely to jeopardize welfare reform. Within the next two years, almost 170,000 single parents on welfare in Florida will have to find work or lose public assistance payments. Yet there are serious concerns whether the supply of child care is sufficient to serve these families.[52] Many of them will need types of care—such as infant care, care for children with special needs, or care during nontraditional hours—that tend to be in particularly short supply. For instance, estimates suggest that one out of three of Florida's WAGES participants are expected to work odd hours.[53]
- The difficulties families on welfare will face are clear when examining specific communities. For example, according to a recent study, as many as 4,766 infants and children in Pinellas County alone may be lacking a slot in a licensed child care center when their parents are pushed into the workforce. The Pinellas Early Childhood Collaborative, a coalition of 18 social service agencies, tracked welfare cases in Pinellas, and compared them against available slots with licensed child care providers. The study found that, in certain areas, parents may have an enormously difficult time finding child care, especially for infants. The regions hardest hit will likely will be in the southern portions of St. Petersburg, an area north of 38th Avenue N and west of the interstate that includes Lealman and Kenneth City, and portions of Clearwater and Dunedin.[54]

Infant care is in short supply
for families trying to get off welfare

Luchelle Lee runs a family child care home in Florida, where she cares for five children at her home during the day, and another child after school. Two of the children she cares for are infants. Lee can vouch for how difficult it can be to find care for an infant. "With welfare reform, I get two or three calls a day for infants," she said. "Infant slots fill up real quick. I say, I'm very sorry. I wish I could recommend someone," she said. "But even the homes I would recommend are full."[55]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Florida

Number of children younger than one[56]	184,152
Number of children younger than six[57]	1,160,206
Number of children ages six to 17[58]	2,262,861
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[59]	82,900
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[60]	696,100
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[61]	63%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[62]	77%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Florida

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[63]	1,257,870
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Florida[64]	$1,789

Annual Child Care Costs in Florida[65]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Florida's urban counties		Florida's rural counties	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,762	$6,289	$4,387	$6,289	$3,825	$5,348
4 years	$3,813	$5,629	$3,844	$5,629	$3,496	$5,184

Many Children in Florida Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Florida require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children? [66]	Yes
Does Florida require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children? [67]	Yes
Average salary for a child care worker in Florida in 1996[68]	$13,560
Annual turnover rate for child care center workers in Florida	30%[69] - 40%[70]
Percentage of child care centers in Florida that were accredited as of 1997[71]	8%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Florida[72]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[73]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	6	3-5	No
27 months	11	4-6	No
3 years	15	7-10	No
4 years	20	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in Florida

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[74]	5,742
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[75]	7,604
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[76]	47%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census, Census of Population and Housing, STF4, 1990. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from Florida Children's Forum, Tallahassee, FL, collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[9] Information from Florida Children's Forum, Tallahassee, FL, collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[10] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[11] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[12] Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, *Valuing Families: The High Cost of Waiting for Child Care Sliding Fee Assistance* (Minneapolis, MN: 1995).

[13] Muenchow, "Executive Director's Report," *The Child Care Focus* (Florida: Florida Children's Forum, October 1997), p. 2.

[14] "Kids Crucial Early Years. The day-care nightmare," Miami, FL: *The Miami Herald*, Dec. 13, 1997.

[15] Dukes, "President's Message," Orlando, FL: *The Source, Resources for the Care and Education of Children*, Winter 1998, pp. 1, 3.

[16] "The Words of Low-Income Parents on Florida's Child Care Waiting List," *The Child Care Focus*, (Florida: Florida Children's Forum, October 1997), p. 3.

[17] "The Words of Low-Income Parents on Florida's Child Care Waiting List," *The Child Care Focus*, (Florida: Florida Children's Forum, October 1997), p. 3.

[18] Muenchow, "Executive Director's Report," *The Child Care Focus*, (Florida: Florida Children's Forum, October 1997), p. 2.

[19] Conversation with Susan Muenchow from the Florida Children's Forum, April 17, 1998.

[20] Information from Florida Children's Forum, Tallahassee, FL, collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[21] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[22] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[23] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[24] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[25] Conversation with Susan Muenchow from the Florida Children's Forum, April 17, 1998. Finding based on results from kindergarten screening and assessments that are conducted by teachers when children enter school.

[26] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[27] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools (October 16, 1997).

[28] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[29] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[30] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[31] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[32] Information from Florida Children's Forum, Tallahassee, FL; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[33] Florida Children's Forum, *Caring for Kids* (Tallahassee, FL: Florida Children's Forum, 1997).

[34] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[35] Information on number of accredited programs from Susan Muenchow of the Florida Children's Forum, telephone conversation on April 17, 1998; and information on the number of licensed centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[36] Improvements are attributed to statutory changes in 1992 which modified the teacher-child ratio from 1:6 to 1:4 for infants, and from 1:8 to 1:6 for toddlers. Improvements are also attributed to the requirement that there be one teacher with a Child Development Associate credential or the equivalent for every 20 children in care. Information provided in Florida Children's Forum, *Caring for Kids* (Tallahassee, FL: Florida Children's Forum, 1997), p. 15.

[37] Sara Rimer, "Children of Working Poor Are Day Care's Forgotten," *The New York Times*, November 25, 1997, p. A22.

[38] Improvements are attributed to statutory changes in 1992 which modified the teacher-child ratio from 1:6 to 1:4 for infants, and from 1:8 to 1:6 for toddlers. Improvements are also attributed to the requirement that there be one teacher with a Child Development Associate credential or the equivalent for every 20 children in care. Information provided in Florida Children's Forum, *Caring for Kids* (Tallahassee, FL: Florida Children's Forum, 1997), p. 15.

[39] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[40] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[41] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[42] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[43] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[44] "The Words of Low-Income Parents on Florida's Child Care Waiting List," *The Child Care Focus*, (Florida: Florida Children's Forum, October 1997), p. 3.

[45] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[46] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[47] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, MA.

[48] Information from Florida Children's Forum, Tallahassee, FL; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[49] Information from Florida Children's Forum, Tallahassee, FL; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[50] Florida Children's Forum, *Caring for Kids* (Tallahassee, FL: Florida Children's Forum, 1997).

[51] Information from Florida Children's Forum, Tallahassee, FL; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[52] Miller, Carol, "Study raises fears of day-care shortage," *St. Petersburg Times*, May 22, 1997.

[53] Florida Children's Forum, *Caring for Kids* (Tallahassee, FL: Florida Children's Forum, 1997).

[54] Miller, Carol, "Study raises fears of day-care shortage," *St. Petersburg Times*, May 22, 1997.

[55] Miller, Carol, "Study raises fears of day-care shortage," *St. Petersburg Times*, May 22, 1997.

[56] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[57] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[58] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[59] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[60] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[61] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[62] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[63] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimates of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on U.S. Census Bureau data, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[64] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[65] Information from Florida Children's Forum, Tallahassee, FL; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[66] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing.* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[67] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing.* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[68] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[69] Turnover rate for child care center teachers. Information from Florida Children's Forum, Tallahassee, FL; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[70] Turnover rate for providers in family child care homes and centers. Florida Children's Forum, *Caring for Kids* (Tallahassee, FL: Florida Children's Forum, 1997).

[71] Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, based on information on number of accredited programs from Susan Muenchow of the Florida Children's Forum, telephone conversation on April 17, 1998; and information on the number of licensed centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[72] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, MA.

[73] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[74] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[75] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[76] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

GEORGIA:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Georgia parents.

- Every day, about 399,000 children younger than six are in child care in Georgia if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Georgia work to help support their families. An estimated 64 percent of Georgia mothers with children younger than six, and 77 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Georgia and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]
- In a recent poll, 91 percent of Georgians stated that they felt that the provision of quality, affordable child care is important to Georgia's families, including three out of four who felt it was very important.[6]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Georgia.

Child care is costly for many families in Georgia.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Georgia in 1997 was $2,244[7]—less than three-fifths the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center.
- Many working families in Georgia earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Georgia with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 607,890 children younger than 13 in Georgia living in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 before taxes for a family of three).[8]
- In Georgia, child care for a four-year-old in a child care center cost $3,900 on average in 1997. Child care is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. For example, the average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Atlanta was $4,992, with fees as high as $7,488; and the average annual cost in Tifton/Tift was $2,756,

with fees as high as $3,380.[9] These expenses are for only one child—parents with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Georgia[10]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Atlanta		Tifton/Tift	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,576	$10,400	$4,524	$10,400	$2,860	$3,380
4 years	$3,900	$7,488	$4,992	$7,488	$2,756	$3,380
8 years[11]	$1,711	$4,107	$3,081	$3,120	$1,711	$2,054

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Atlanta		Tifton/Tift	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,900	$7,488	$5,616	$7,488	$2,860	$3,900
4 years	$3,380	$7,488	$5,200	$7,488	$2,860	$3,640
8 years	$2,738	$4,107	$3,423	$4,107	$1,711	$1,711

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year old in a child care center at the average price in Georgia, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *40 percent* of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in Georgia are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Georgia ranks in the bottom half of states in making low-income families eligible for child care assistance. The state only allows low-income working families with incomes below about $24,300 (for a family of three) to be eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $34,900. This cutoff is lower than in a number of nearby states, including Tennessee, North Carolina, and Louisiana.[12]

Child care assistance helps Georgia parents work

Those families who do receive assistance realize what a difference it makes. At a public hearing in Tifton, residents urged Georgia's Department of Family and Children's Services office to keep funding quality child care and providing support for parents who cannot afford child care for their children. "If it wasn't for the funds we have received, I don't know what I would do..." single mother Geneva Brownlee said. "If it weren't for the program, I wouldn't be able to work," said single mother Shirley Green. Jim Cattell, a single father of two girls, said his stress load is much lighter because he knows his children are safe. For child care, "there is no amount of money that should be spared, no amount of time, no amount of anything," he said.[13] *Unfortunately, many others with similar economic situations as these parents are without child care help.*

- Even with Georgia's low income cutoff, many hard-working families who *are* eligible are unable to get child care assistance due to inadequate funding. In September 1997, 12,195 children were on the waiting list, and the list has been growing (it was started in July 1997).[14] Research has shown that parents waiting for child care assistance are likely to face serious financial difficulties, have difficulty staying employed, go on welfare, and/or have serious concerns about the quality of their children's care because they cannot afford good quality care.[15]

- Georgia's waiting list underestimates the number of families who are eligible for help but are not getting it because some families may not sign up, believing it is futile, and others may not even know they are eligible. For example, a 1996 study of transitional child care in the state found that former welfare recipients are often unaware of the child care subsidies available to help them once they are in the workforce, and that multiple education and communications strategies are needed to increase their awareness.[16]
- Many hard-working low-income families who have not been on welfare are unable to get assistance in Georgia. Less than half of the children who do receive subsidies belong to poor working families who have never received cash assistance,[17] and the state has frozen intake for (or been unable to serve) new non-welfare families since September 1997. This category remained frozen as of March 17, 1998.[18]
- The situation is likely to get worse in coming years, as more families are required to move from welfare to work. In a recent survey, Georgia reported that, without additional funds, it is not confident that it will be able to meet the demand for child care assistance generated by the increase in welfare work requirements.[19] Low-income working families who are *not* on welfare may end up losing assistance as more families on welfare need help.
- Georgia does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 65 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Georgia spent 35 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[20]
- Georgia has made a significant investment in universal prekindergarten for four-year-old children. The Georgia prekindergarten programs will serve an estimated 60,000 in the 1998-99 school year. These programs are funded on a part-day basis, so they must also access the limited funds available for child care assistance if they are to meet the needs of low-income parents working outside the home full-time. Nonetheless, competition for enrollment is tough, and often programs take children on a first-come, first-serve basis, or a lottery system. Parents line up at dawn in the first weeks of March, when they can begin signing up, to increase their odds of securing a spot.[21]

Even those Georgia parents that are fortunate enough to receive child care assistance often face limited choices due to insufficient state payment rates.

- Families in Georgia who receive child care assistance still face enormous difficulties finding providers who will take care of their children, as the amount the state will pay for care is significantly below market prices. As of January 1998, the amount that Georgia paid for child care was less than the market price charged in *1995*[22]—despite the fact that the cost of child care in Georgia has continued to increase.[23] As a consequence, providers either have to ask parents to make up the difference between the amount the state will pay and the amount providers charge (in addition to the parent fees required by the state), or refuse to take care of children receiving help from the state. In contrast, a number of nearby states, including Alabama, Florida, Arkansas, and Virginia, all paid at levels that allowed families receiving child care subsidies a broader range of choices than in Georgia.[24]

- The amount Georgia will pay for care particularly limits the options of families with very young children living in rural areas—in such areas, the state's reimbursement rate for infant care is the same as the rate for care for toddlers and preschoolers, although infant care is generally more expensive.[25]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Georgia are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Georgia affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[26] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[27] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[28]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Georgia.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Georgia's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Georgia—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Georgia's children from harm.
- Georgia is one of the many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, Georgia did not meet recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for *any* of the six age groups examined.[29] For instance, the state allowed a caregiver in a child care center to care for as many as 15 three-year-olds or 18 four-year-olds alone, although early childhood experts recommend no more than seven to 10. This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.
- Georgia's current requirements for staff/child ratios, group size, staff training and staff qualifications remain weaker than levels recommended by experts and weaker than regulations in over half the states nationwide.[30]
- Periodic inspections by licensing staff are one of the most important ways to ensure the safety and well-being of children in licensed child care programs, as the inspections allow the licensers to detect unsafe situations such as safety risks, unsanitary practices, and too many children to supervise adequately. Yet in Georgia, inspectors visit only about 10 percent of the state's 6,000 existing family child care providers (private homes caring for three to six children) annually.[31]
- States can choose to exempt some child care programs from all licensing requirements, including basic health and safety protections and criminal background checks. In 1997, a committee responsible for studying Georgia's child care regulatory system found that the state had a relatively large number of programs exempt from licensing requirements, and

estimated that over 75,000 Georgia children were cared for in programs exempt from basic protections.[32]

- Georgia does provide some protections for children receiving public funds who are cared for in unregulated settings. Georgia's Department of Family and Children's Services has recently increased health and safety monitoring of those unregulated child care providers who receive public funds in order to identify problems that may place children at risk. In the 515 monitoring visits conducted by the Office of Regulatory Services during March 1997, 425 unregulated providers were found to have health and safety deficiencies.[33]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[34] Georgia is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[35]

Provider training can make a difference

Meschery Pollard, a family child care provider, thought her home was already quite safe for children before she viewed a health-and-safety training video given to her by a counselor at Child Care Solutions, a project of the Save the Children Child Care Support Center in Atlanta. "My home was safe to me," she had thought to herself, "and needed no corrections." After viewing the training video, however, Pollard decided to adopt an infant's frame of mind and look around her home again. "I walked down my hallway where there is a long runner," she said. "The rugs had strings on both ends, and I thought to myself what an infant would think, 'I'll just put one of those strings in my mouth.' I then became a toddler to try to imagine what a toddler would see and do. I started to walk outside to play, but instead I walked straight into the storage house—which wasn't locked. I could have fallen over the lawn mower inside. Now I have made several corrections to my home environment to make it more safe for infants and young children. Among other things, I have cut the strings on the rug and locked the storage house. Learning how to see my environment from another perspective has helped me prepare my home for child care—and it has increased my understanding about state regulations."[36]

- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[37] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Georgia was only $12,340 (only slightly above minimum wage)[38] and national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[39]
- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. In Georgia in 1997, one out of five (20 percent) child care teachers and three out of

ten (or 29 percent) assistant teachers left their jobs.[40] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[41]

- According to a poll conducted in October 1997, Georgians support steps to improve the quality of care. The poll found that 81 percent of Georgians support providing scholarships, academic counseling, and other incentives so that child care teachers can get additional formal education. Similarly, 79 percent of Georgians support state funding for training and equipment to improve the quality of child care.[42]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Georgia.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in Georgia. In 1997, only about 132 of Georgia's 2,119 licensed child care centers (or six percent) were accredited.[43] None of the 11 licensed centers in Tift were accredited.[44]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Georgia face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Georgia school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Georgia families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 303,356 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Georgia live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[45]
- Georgia children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[46] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[47] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[48] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Georgia, only about one out of three public schools (1,723 or 36 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[49]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Georgia.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[50] This means as many as 49,000 babies in Georgia are in child care if national patterns hold true.[51]

- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Georgia's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.

- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping very young children grow, many states allow a single caregiver to care for too many infants and toddlers. Georgia allows a single caregiver in a center to care for *eight* 18-month-old toddlers. In contrast, early childhood experts recommend no more than three to five children this age per adult. It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, diaper, play, and care for *eight* active 18-month-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency.[52]

- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Georgia to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Georgia in 1997 averaged $4,576, and went as high as $7,488.[53]

Parents in Georgia that work nontraditional hours have particular trouble finding good child care in their communities.

- The Child Care Support Center in Atlanta has sought to increase the number of caregivers who offer child care during nontraditional hours, but the growth in supply has not kept pace with parents' growing need for odd-hour care:
  - ⇒ Between the first six months of 1996 and the first six months of 1997, the number of requests for care in child care centers during nontraditional hours increased by 54 percent for overnight care (from 168 to 259 requests), by 24 percent for evening care (from 600 to 744 requests), and by 56 percent for 24-hour care (from 156 to 243 requests). Unfortunately, centers reported virtually no increase in their capacity to provide care during nontraditional hours in this period.[54]
  - ⇒ While there was an increase of the capacity to provide care during nontraditional hours among family child care providers, it was not sufficient to meet the growing demand. Between early 1996 and early 1997, the requests for overnight care in family child care in Atlanta increased by 38 percent, while the capacity to provide such care only increased by 27 percent; and the number of requests for 24-hour care increased by 41 percent, while the capacity to provide such care increased by only 31 percent.[55]

As more parents move from welfare to work, the demand for affordable, quality child care will continue to grow beyond the existing child care capacity.

- As of 1996, Georgia's Department of Family and Children Services anticipated that former welfare recipients entering the workforce in 1997 would need to find child care for more than 57,000 additional children in the Atlanta metropolitan area alone.[56]

- Between January and June 1997, the number of calls to Atlanta's Child Care Support Center from parents who were leaving welfare for work was 61 percent greater than in the same period in 1996. The increase in parents calls has stretched the system beyond its capacity to respond adequately to requests for help finding child care. In one day alone last summer, for example, the agency's counselors answered 106 calls, operating at full capacity. Meanwhile, another 155 callers abandoned their calls while on hold. Without additional resources for such agencies, families will be unable to get the child care information they need in order to find the best place for their child.[57]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Georgia

Number of children younger than one[58]	108,849
Number of children younger than six[59]	664,932
Number of children ages six to 17[60]	1,287,524
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[61]	49,000
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[62]	399,000
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[63]	64%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[64]	77%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Georgia

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty) [65]	607,890
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Georgia[66]	$2,244

Annual Child Care Costs in Georgia[67]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Atlanta		Tifton/Tift	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,576	$10,400	$4,524	$10,400	$2,860	$3,380
4 years	$3,900	$7,488	$4,992	$7,488	$2,756	$3,380
8 years[68]	$1,711	$4,107	$3,081	$3,120	$1,711	$2,054

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Atlanta		Tifton/Tift	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,900	$7,488	$5,616	$7,488	$2,860	$3,900
4 years	$3,380	$7,488	$5,200	$7,488	$2,860	$3,640
8 years	$2,738	$4,107	$3,423	$4,107	$1,711	$1,711

Many Children in Georgia Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Georgia require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children? [69]	Yes
Does Georgia require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children? [70]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in Georgia in 1996[71]	$12,340
Annual turnover rate for child care teachers in Georgia in 1997[72]	20%
Percentage of child care centers in Georgia that were accredited as of 1997[73]	6%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Georgia[74]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[75]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	6	3-4	No
18 months	8	3-5	No
27 months	10	4-6	No
3 years	15	7-10	No
4 years	18	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in Georgia

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[76]	2,119
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[77]	6,309
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[78]	36%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Beth Schapiro & Associates, Georgia Legislative Poll, (Atlanta, GA: Beth Schapiro & Associates, October 1997). The percentage of respondents indicating that child care was important is a total of those stating it was either "very important" or "somewhat important." The percentage of respondents indicating that the supported funding is a total of those stating they either "strongly supported" or "somewhat supported" funding.

[7] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[8] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[9] Information from Georgia Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Tifton, GA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[10] Information from Georgia Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Tifton, GA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[11] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] Stribling, "Parents want funds for child care," Tifton, GA: *The Tifton Gazette*, April 30, 1997.

[14] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[15] Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, *Valuing Families: The High Cost of Waiting for Child Care Sliding Fee Assistance* (Minneapolis, MN: 1995).

[16] The study, which was conducted by the Child Care Action Campaign in partnership with the Save the Children Child Care Support Center, involved three focus groups for more than 50 parents, surveys of hundreds of parents, and interviews with state agency representatives in Clayton, Paulding, Polk and DeKalb counties. Information from Save the Children Child Care Support Center, *Reaching Out to Help Greater Metropolitan Atlanta Families Meet Their Child Care Needs: 1996-97 Statistics, Programs, Trends and Issues*, (Atlanta, GA: Save the Children Child Care Support Center, 1997), p. 15.

[17] Child Care Support Center, *Georgia Parents Need Child Care to Work* (Atlanta, GA: Save the Children Child Care Support Center, 1997).

[18] Information from Georgia Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Tifton, GA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[19] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[20] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[21] Hill, "Head Start on Education; Cramming for pre-K...," Atlanta, GA: *The Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, February 5, 1998, p. 01G

[22] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[23] Information from Georgia Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Tifton, GA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[24] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[25] Information from Georgia Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Tifton, GA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[26] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[27] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[28] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[29] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[30] Information from Georgia Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Tifton, GA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[31] Joyner, "Money and more: Parents often struggle with child care costs," Atlanta, GA: *The Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, January 18, 1998, p. 03P.

[32] Georgia Childhood Care Regulatory Study Committee, *Report to the Georgia Board of Human Resources*, September 1997, p. 4.

[33] Information from Georgia Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Tifton, GA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[34] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools. (October 16, 1997).

[35] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[36] Save the Children Child Care Support Center, *Reaching Out to Help Greater Metropolitan Atlanta Families Meet Their Child Care Needs: 1996-97 Statistics, Programs, Trends and Issues*, (Atlanta, GA: Save the Children Child Care Support Center, 1997), p. 6.

[37] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[38] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[39] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[40] *A Decade of Change in Center-Based Child Care*, Center for the Child Care Workforce, Washington, DC, as reported in *Current Data on Child Care Salaries and Benefits in the United States*, Center for the Child Care Workforce (Washington, DC: Center for the Child Care Workforce, March 1998).

[41] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[42] Beth Schapiro & Associates, Georgia Legislative Poll, (Atlanta, GA: Beth Schapiro & Associates, October 1997). The poll was conducted for the Save the Children Child Care Support Center.

[43] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[44] Information from Georgia Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Tifton, GA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[45] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[46] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[47] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[48] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[49] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[50] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[51] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[52] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[53] Information from Georgia Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Tifton, GA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[54] Save the Children Child Care Support Center, *Reaching Out to Help Greater Metropolitan Atlanta Families Meet Their Child Care Needs: 1996-97 Statistics, Programs, Trends and Issues*, (Atlanta, GA: Save the Children Child Care Support Center, 1997), pp. 12-13.

[55] Save the Children Child Care Support Center, *Reaching Out to Help Greater Metropolitan Atlanta Families Meet Their Child Care Needs: 1996-97 Statistics, Programs, Trends and Issues*, (Atlanta, GA: Save the Children Child Care Support Center, 1997), pp. 12-13.

[56] Save the Children Child Care Support Center, *Reaching Out to Help Greater Metropolitan Atlanta Families Meet Their Child Care Needs: 1996-97 Statistics, Programs, Trends and Issues*, (Atlanta, GA: Save the Children Child Care Support Center, 1997), p. 5.

[57] Save the Children Child Care Support Center, *Reaching Out to Help Greater Metropolitan Atlanta Families Meet Their Child Care Needs: 1996-97 Statistics, Programs, Trends and Issues*, (Atlanta, GA: Save the Children Child Care Support Center, 1997), p. 12.

[58] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[59] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[60] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[61] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[62] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[63] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[64] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[65] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[66] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[67] Information from Georgia Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Tifton, GA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[68] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[69] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[70] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[71] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[72] *A Decade of Change in Center-Based Child Care*, Center for the Child Care Workforce, Washington, DC, as reported in *Current Data on Child Care Salaries and Benefits in the United States*, Center for the Child Care Workforce (Washington, DC: Center for the Child Care Workforce, March 1998).

[73] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[74] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[75] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[76] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[77] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[78] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

KENTUCKY:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Kentucky parents.

- Every day, about 187,200 children younger than six are in child care in Kentucky if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Kentucky work to help support their families. An estimated 57 percent of Kentucky mothers with children younger than six, and 68 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Kentucky and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Kentucky.

Child care is costly for many families in Kentucky.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Kentucky in 1997 was $2,241[6]—about two-thirds the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center.
- Many families in Kentucky earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Kentucky with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 35,190 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[7]
- In Kentucky, child care for a four-year-old in a child care center cost $3,276 on average in 1997. Child care is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. The average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Louisville was $3,905, with fees as high as $7,275; and the average cost in Bullitt County was $3,331, with fees as high as $3,900.[8] These expenses are for only one child—parents with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Kentucky[9]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Louisville		Bullitt County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,318	n.a.	$4,320	$7,020	$3,700	$4,264
4 years	$3,276	n.a.	$3,905	$7,275	$3,331	$3,900
8 years[10]	$3,798	n.a.	$3,965	$5,990	n.a.	n.a.

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Louisville		Bullitt County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,235	n.a.	$3,869	$6,500	$3,315	$3,900
4 years	$3,150	n.a.	$3,602	$7,800	$3,068	$3,380
8 years	$2,779	n.a.	$3,295	$5,990	n.a.	n.a.

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year old in a child care center at the average price in Kentucky, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *31 percent* of their income for child care

Many low-income working families in Kentucky are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Kentucky ranks among the bottom five states in making low-income families eligible for child care assistance. As of January 1998, 45 states allowed families with higher incomes to receive state subsidies. Only those low-income working families earning less than $17,700 (for a family of three) are eligible for any child care help in Kentucky, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $29,000. This cutoff is lower than in a number of nearby states, including Tennessee, Illinois, and Indiana.[11]
- Even with Kentucky's low income cutoff, many hard-working families who *are* eligible are unable to get child care assistance due to inadequate funding. In December 1997, 6,062 eligible children (3,513 families) were on waiting lists for child care assistance in the state.[12] Research has shown that parents waiting for child care assistance are likely to face serious financial difficulties, have difficulty staying employed, go on welfare, and/or have serious concerns about their children's care because they cannot afford higher quality care.[13]
- Kentucky's waiting list may actually underestimate the number of families who are not getting served, since the state reports that some eligible families may not even know they can get help paying for child care.[14]

Parents unable to get child care assistance lose opportunities to improve their lives

A young single Kentucky mother of two children (ages one and five) was having problems finding child care that she could afford. The young woman had a part-time job and was in school, getting excellent grades, but because of a lack of funds for the child care subsidy program, she could not receive help paying for child care. She ended up having to quit school because she could not afford child care.[15]

- Research demonstrates that child care assistance helps families move from welfare to work. A 1992 study in Kentucky found that child care subsidies increased the likelihood of employment by 12 percent, independent of such factors as the availability of jobs.[16] Unfortunately, such child care assistance may not be available to many families struggling to leave or stay off welfare.

- Kentucky families are likely to face even greater difficulties getting access to child care assistance as more parents move from welfare to work. The Kentucky Cabinet for Family and Children's Services reports that as parents receiving welfare move into jobs, an estimated 17,500 additional children will need child care.[17] The state is uncertain about whether it can meet this growing demand without additional funds, according to a recent survey.[18] Low-income working families who are *not* on welfare may end up losing assistance as more families on welfare need help.

- Kentucky does not invest enough in helping families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 86 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Kentucky spent 26 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[19]

Even those Kentucky families fortunate enough to receive child care assistance often cannot get the care they want because of inadequate state policies.

- Families in Kentucky who receive child care assistance have difficulty finding providers who will take care of their children because the amount the state will pay for care is below market prices. For example, in Kentucky's urban areas, the average child care rate for infants is $90 a week, but the state will pay a maximum of only $80 a week. This is because the state rates are based on 1996 market prices, before the two state minimum wage increases took effect.[20] Because of these low rates, providers either have to ask parents to make up the difference (in addition to the parent fees required by the state), or refuse to take care of children receiving help from the state.

- Delays in reimbursements from the state also create problems for child care providers. Delayed payments caused at least one Kentucky child care center such financial hardship that the center was forced to stop taking care of children receiving child care assistance. The parents have been asked to remove their children from this center and to make other child care arrangements.[21]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Kentucky are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Kentucky affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[22] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[23] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults [24]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Kentucky.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Kentucky's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Kentucky—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Kentucky's children from harm.

- Kentucky is one of the many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, Kentucky did not meet recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for *any* of the six age groups examined.[25] For example, the state allowed a caregiver in a center to care for as many as 12 three-year-olds or 14 four-year-olds alone, although early childhood experts recommend no more than seven to 10. This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[26] Kentucky is one of 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior early childhood training.[27]

- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[28] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Kentucky was $12,740 (only slightly above minimum wage).[29] National studies of child care providers find that they also tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[30]

- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in Kentucky. For example, in Bullitt County, one out of three family child care homes go out of business each year, and in Louisville, one out of six go out of business each year.[31] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[32]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Kentucky.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in Kentucky. In 1997, only about 114 of Kentucky's 1,888 licensed child care centers (or 6 percent) were accredited.[33] In some communities, accredited centers are particularly hard to find. As of December 1997, only 12 of Louisville's 360 licensed operating child care centers (3 percent), and none of Bullitt County's 27 licensed centers, were accredited.[34]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Kentucky face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Kentucky school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Kentucky families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. The Census Bureau estimates that 180,606 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Kentucky live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[35]

- Kentucky children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[36] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[37] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[38] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.

- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Kentucky, less than half of the public schools (1,327 or 49 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[39]

- There is additional evidence that parents have difficulty finding school-age care in a number of Kentucky communities. In Oldham and Bullitt Counties, there is a shortage of school-age care during nontraditional hours and a lack of transportation to and from before- and after-school activities. The child care resource and referral agency in the area has attempted to find child care for several families who have requested these kinds of care, yet has been unable to locate any options that could meet their needs for transportation and nontraditional hour care.[40]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Kentucky.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[41] This means as many as 22,800 babies in Kentucky are in child care if national patterns hold true.[42]

- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Kentucky's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.

- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping very young children grow, Kentucky allows a single caregiver to care for six 18-month-old toddlers. In contrast, early childhood experts recommend no more than three to five toddlers this age per adult.[43] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, diaper, play, and care for six active 18-month-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency.

- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Kentucky to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Kentucky in 1997 averaged $3,318 statewide, but could cost as much $7,020.[44]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Kentucky

Number of children younger than one[45]	50,617
Number of children younger than six[46]	312,047
Number of children ages six to 17[47]	656,613
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[48]	22,800
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[49]	187,200
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[50]	57%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[51]	68%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Kentucky

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty) [52]	35,190
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Kentucky[53]	$2,241

Annual Child Care Costs in Kentucky[54]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Louisville		Bullitt County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,318	n.a.	$4,320	$7,020	$3,700	$4,264
4 years	$3,276	n.a.	$3,905	$7,275	$3,331	$3,900
8 years[55]	$3,798	n.a.	$3,965	$5,990	n.a.	n.a.

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Louisville		Bullitt County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,235	n.a.	$3,869	$6,500	$3,315	$3,900
4 years	$3,150	n.a.	$3,602	$7,800	$3,068	$3,380
8 years	$2,779	n.a.	$3,295	$5,990	n.a.	n.a.

Many Children in Kentucky Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Kentucky require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children? [56]		No
Does Kentucky require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children? [57]		Yes
Average salary for a child care worker in Kentucky in 1996[58]		$12,740
Annual turnover rates for family child care providers:[59]	in Louisville, KY	17%
	in Bullitt County, KY	33%
Percentage of child care centers in Kentucky that were accredited as of 1997[60]		6%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Kentucky[61]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[62]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	5	3-4	No
18 months	6	3-5	No
27 months	10	4-6	No
3 years	12	7-10	No
4 years	14	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in Kentucky

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[63]	1,888
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[64]	154
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[65]	644
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[66]	49%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from Kentucky Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Louisville, KY; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[9] Information from Kentucky Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Louisville, KY; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[10] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[11] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, *Valuing Families: The High Cost of Waiting for Child Care Sliding Fee Assistance* (Minneapolis, MN: 1995).

[14] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[15] Information from Kentucky Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Louisville, KY; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[16] Berger and Black, "Child Care Subsidies, Quality of Care, and the Labor Supply of Low-Income, Single Mothers," *Review of Economics and Statistics*, Vol. 74, No. 2 (November 1992) pp. 635-642.

[17] Editorial, "Child care, Kentucky must do better by kids of working poor," Lexington, KY: *Lexington Herald-Leader*, September 7, 1997.

[18] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[19] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[20] Information from Kentucky Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Louisville, KY; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[21] Information from Kentucky Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Louisville, KY, collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[22] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[23] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[24] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[25] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[26] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools. (October 16, 1997).

[27] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[28] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[29] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[30] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (NCECW: Washington, DC). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[31] Information from Kentucky Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Louisville, KY; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[32] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[33] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[34] Information from Kentucky Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Louisville, KY; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[35] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[36] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[37] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[38] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[39] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[40] Information from Kentucky Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Louisville, KY; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[41] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[42] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996, (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[43] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[44] Information from Kentucky Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Louisville, KY; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[45] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[46] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[47] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[48] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[49] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[50] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[51] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[52] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[53] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[54] Information from Kentucky Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Louisville, KY; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[55] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[56] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing.* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[57] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing.* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[58] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[59] Information from Kentucky Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Louisville, KY; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[60] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm, and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[61] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[62] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[63] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[64] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[65] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[66] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

LOUISIANA: CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Louisiana parents.

- Every day, about 237,500 children younger than six are in child care in Louisiana if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours or more a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Louisiana work to help support their families. An estimated 57 percent of Louisiana mothers with children younger than six, and 67 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Louisiana and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]
- In *Working Mother* magazine's 1997 report on child care in each state, Louisiana ranked (with Idaho and Mississippi) at the bottom of the list. Louisiana ranked at the bottom in all four categories examined: quality, safety, state commitment to child care, and child care availability.[6]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Louisiana.

Child care is costly for many families in Louisiana.

- Child care costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Louisiana in 1997 was $2,230[7]—about two-thirds the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center.
- Many families in Louisiana earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Louisiana with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 515,430 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[8]
- In Louisiana in 1997, child care for one four-year-old in a child care center cost $3,264 on average. Child care is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. For example, the average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in New Orleans region

was $3,470, with fees as high as $6,522; and the average cost in Lafayette was $3,187, with fees as high as $3,900.[9] These expenses are for only one child—parents with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in Louisiana, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *31 percent* of their income for child care.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Louisiana[10]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		New Orleans		Lafayette	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,471	$6,760	$3,677	$6,760	$3,438	$4,316
4 years	$3,264	$6,522	$3,470	$6,522	$3,187	$3,900
8 years[11]	$2,480	$5,990	$1,833	$3,594	$2,073	$2,396

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		New Orleans		Lafayette	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$2,677	$6,240	$2,444	$4,940	$2,919	$3,380
4 years	$2,595	$4,940	$2,421	$4,940	$2,714	$2,912
8 years	$2,000	$3,628	$1,975	$3,423	$1,369	n.a.

Many low-income working families in Louisiana are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- According to state officials, many low-income working families in Louisiana are not aware that they are eligible for assistance. If these families do realize that they can get help and start to apply for child care assistance, demand may soon exceed the state's resources.[12]
- Louisiana does not invest enough in helping families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 17 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Louisiana spent 180 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[13]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Louisiana are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Louisiana affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[14] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[15] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[16]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Louisiana.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Louisiana's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Louisiana—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Louisiana's children from harm.
- Louisiana is one of many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, the state did not meet recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for *any* of the six age groups examined. For instance, the state allowed a caregiver in a center to care for as many as 14 three-year-olds or 16 four-year-olds alone, although early childhood experts recommend no more than seven to 10. These are among the worst ratios in the country for this age group, and they make it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.[17]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. As one child care expert in Louisiana notes, "Pre-service training can make all the difference. We cannot train providers on the job. The children are the ones who pay then."[18] Yet, although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[19] Louisiana is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[20] It is also one of 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior training.[21]
- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[22] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Louisiana was only $10,760 (just above minimum wage).[23] National studies of child care providers find that they also tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[24]

Centers cannot find the trained staff needed to keep their doors open

Until recently, there were three small child care centers in Shreveport offering high quality care. The programs were nationally accredited and located in outstanding, low-rent, city-owned sites. Yet, after operating for 10 years, all three of these programs have closed. The centers simply could not hire and keep quality, trained staff. Other centers have faced similar staff problems. One site now operating in Shreveport is licensed for 200 children, but currently is only able to enroll 140 children because the program cannot find well-qualified staff.[25]

- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. While nationwide, annual turnover rates for public school teachers are only 6.6 percent,[26] about one-third of child care teachers leave their centers each year.[27] Programs in

Louisiana face the same problems—several centers have had difficulties trying to convince staff to stay when they are unable to offer sufficient salaries or other incentives.[28]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Louisiana.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in Louisiana. In 1997, only about 47 of Louisiana's 1,826 licensed child care centers (or 3 percent) were accredited.[29]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Louisiana face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Louisiana school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Louisiana families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 275,410 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Louisiana live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[30]
- Louisiana children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[31] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[32] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[33] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Louisiana, only about one in five public schools (1,446 or 19 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[34]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Louisiana.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[35] This means as many as 28,400 babies in Louisiana are in child care if national patterns hold true.[36]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Louisiana's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping very young children grow, Louisiana allows a single caregiver to care for eight 18-

month-old toddlers. In contrast, early childhood experts recommend no more than three to five toddlers this age per adult.[37] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, diaper, play, and care for eight active 18-month-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency.

- Care for infants is often more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Louisiana to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Louisiana in 1997 averaged $3,471, but could cost as much as $6,760.[38]
- There is a serious shortage of infant and toddler care in Louisiana, report child care advocates in New Orleans and in the northwest part of the state.[39] Many providers do not provide infant/toddler care due to the high cost of running a quality infant/toddler program,[40] which means that those centers that do provide care to infants and toddlers have long waiting lists. Mandeville and Metairie are just two of the communities in the state experiencing shortages of infant care. As a result of these shortages, Louisiana's resource and referral agencies have often been unable to help parents looking for care for their very young children.[41]

Other families in Louisiana face shortages of care as well—such as families who are trying to move from welfare to work and need care during nontraditional hours.

- Many parents trying to move from welfare to work can only find jobs with nontraditional work schedules. Unfortunately, according to Child Care Services of Northwest Louisiana, there is not nearly enough care available in the state during the hours when these parents need it.[42]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Louisiana

Number of children younger than one[43]	63,112
Number of children younger than six[44]	395,778
Number of children ages six to 17[45]	837,677
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[46]	28,400
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[47]	237,500
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[48]	57%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[49]	67%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Louisiana

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty) [50]	515,430
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Louisiana[51]	$2,230

Annual Child Care Costs in Louisiana[52]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		New Orleans		Lafayette	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,471	$6,760	$3,677	$6,760	$3,438	$4,316
4 years	$3,264	$6,522	$3,470	$6,522	$3,187	$3,900
8 years[53]	$2,480	$5,990	$1,833	$3,594	$2,073	$2,396

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		New Orleans		Lafayette	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$2,677	$6,240	$2,444	$4,940	$2,919	$3,380
4 years	$2,595	$4,940	$2,421	$4,940	$2,714	$2,912
8 years	$2,000	$3,628	$1,975	$3,423	$1,369	n.a.

Many Children in Louisiana Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Louisiana require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children? [54]	No
Does Louisiana require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children? [55]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in Louisiana in 1996[56]	$10,760
Percentage of child care centers in Louisiana that were accredited as of 1997[57]	3%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Louisiana[58]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[59]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	6	3-4	No
18 months	8	3-5	No
27 months	12	4-6	No
3 years	14	7-10	No
4 years	16	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in Louisiana

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[60]	1,826
Number of registered family child care homes in 1997[61]	10,000
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[62]	19%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Holcomb, et al., "Fifth Annual Survey: Child Care, How Does Your State Rate?," *Working Mother*, July/August 1997.

[7] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[8] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[9] Information from Child Care Services, Inc. of Northwest Louisiana, Shreveport, LA, collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, April 1998.

[10] Information from Child Care Services, Inc. of Northwest Louisiana, Shreveport, LA, collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, April 1998.

[11] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[12] General Accounting Office, *Welfare Reform: States' Efforts to Expand Child Care Programs*, GAO/HEHS-98-27 (Washington, DC: General Accounting Office, January 1998).

[13] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[14] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children, Executive Summary*, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[15] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[16] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[17] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[18] Conversation with Nancy Alexander, Child Care Services of Northwest Louisiana, Shreveport, LA, March 1998.

[19] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools (October 16, 1997).

[20] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[21] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[22] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[23] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[24] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[25] Conversation with Nancy Alexander, Child Care Services of Northwest Louisiana, Shreveport, LA, March 1998.

[26] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[27] National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW).

[28] Conversation with Nancy Alexander, Child Care Services of Northwest Louisiana, Shreveport, LA, March 1998.

[29] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[30] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[31] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[32] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[33] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[34] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[35] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[36] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[37] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[38] Information from Child Care Services, Inc. of Northwest Louisiana, Shreveport, LA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, April 1998.

[39] Conversation with Nancy Alexander, Child Care Services of Northwest Louisiana, Shreveport, LA, March 1998 and information from Agenda for Children, New Orleans, LA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[40] Conversation with Nancy Alexander, Child Care Services of Northwest Louisiana, Shreveport, LA, March 1998.

[41] Information from Agenda for Children, New Orleans, LA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[42] Conversation with Nancy Alexander, Child Care Services of Northwest Louisiana, Shreveport, LA, March 1998.

[43] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[44] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[45] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[46] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[47] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[48] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[49] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[50] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[51] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[52] Information from Child Care Services, Inc. of Northwest Louisiana, Shreveport, LA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, April 1998.

[53] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[54] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing.* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[55] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing.* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[56] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[57] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[58] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[59] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[60] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[61] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[62] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

MARYLAND:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Maryland parents.

- Every day, about 262,400 children younger than six are in child care in Maryland if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Maryland work to help support their families. An estimated 66 percent of Maryland mothers with children younger than six, and 81 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Maryland and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Maryland.

Child care is costly for many families in Maryland.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Maryland in 1997 was $3,848[6]—about three-fourths the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center.
- Many families in Maryland earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Maryland with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 336,030 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[7]
- In Maryland, child care for a four-year-old in a child care center cost $4,968 on average in 1997, with fees as high as $10,660. Child care is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. For example, the average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Baltimore City was $4,528, with fees as high as $9,880; and the average annual cost in Allegany, Garrett, and Washington Counties was $3,636, with fees as high as $5,200.[8] These expenses are for only one child—parents with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Maryland[9]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Baltimore City		Allegany, Garrett, Washington Counties	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$7,919	$13,520	$7,980	$10,140	$4,560	$7,280
4 years	$4,968	$10,660	$4,528	$9,880	$3,636	$5,200
8 years[10]	$3,654	$8,386	$3,306	$5,990	$2,612	$3,594

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Baltimore City		Allegany, Garrett, Washington Counties	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$5,330	$11,440	$4,835	$10,920	$3,992	$6,500
4 years	$4,544	$10,400	$4,159	$9,100	$3,670	$5,200
8 years	$3,606	n.a.	$3,354	n.a.	$2,684	n.a.

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in Maryland, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *60 percent* of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in Maryland are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Maryland ranks 40th among all states in making low-income families eligible for child care assistance. Only those low-income working families earning less than $18,409* (for a family of three) are eligible for any child care help in Maryland, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $43,011.[11] *[Families already receiving assistance can continue doing so until their annual income reaches $22,436.]

- Maryland's eligibility cutoff is lower than that of a number of nearby states, including Virginia, Delaware, and Pennsylvania. When compared to the typical income of families in the state, Maryland's income cutoff is the lowest in the country. While the federal government allows families earning up to 85 percent of state median income to be eligible for child care assistance, Maryland's cutoff is at 36 percent of state median income.[12]

- As more parents are required to move from welfare to work, many additional families will need help with child care expenses. In Maryland, it is estimated that meeting the goals of welfare reform will require a total of 18,555 child care slots in FY 1997, 20,000 in FY 1998, 25,000 in FY 1999, and 32,000 in FY 2000.[13] Yet, a recent survey indicates that, without additional funds, the state is not confident that it will be able to meet this growing demand.[14]

- Families receiving child care assistance in Maryland continue to shoulder a huge financial burden, as the state currently requires parents to pay such high copayments that many low-income families cannot afford to access a child care subsidy from the Purchase of Care program. For example, a single mother earning just $14,040 per year ($1,170 per month) and receiving help with child care costs for her infant would still have a copayment of $209 per month—or 18 percent of her salary. With rent costing over $600 (for a two-bedroom apartment in Baltimore) and food costing about $250 per month, this copayment would leave little money left over for necessary expenses such as clothing, transportation, and health care.[15]

Maryland families struggle to afford care

The cost of child care is a barrier for low-income families in Maryland, who pay a large percentage of their income to purchase care. Alexandra Whaken, a new mother in Hagerstown, used the services of the Western Maryland LOCATE: Child Care and found care for her infant daughter, Brea, in a high-quality family child care home. Alexandra can pay for this care because she receives a subsidy, which covers about half the bill. Still, as a single parent, Alexandra is hard pressed to make ends meet. Despite the subsidy, she has had to take a second job, working evenings and weekends—"I'm taking the second job to pay for the child care for the first job," she said.[16]

- Maryland does not invest enough in helping families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 56 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Maryland spent 37 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[17]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Maryland are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Maryland affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[18] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[19] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[20]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are often inadequate.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Maryland's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Maryland—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Maryland's children from harm.
- Far too many states do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, Maryland was one of only nine states that met recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for all six age groups examined.[21]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[22] Maryland requires teachers in child care centers to have only six hours of early childhood training before caring for children[23]

- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100).[24] In addition to low wages, national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[25]

- In Maryland, child care providers' wages are significantly lower than school teachers' salaries. In the 1995-96 school year, the average annual wage rate for a Maryland public school teacher was $41,245. In comparison, 1997 data show that the average annual wage in Maryland was $11,423 for a child care center aide, $15,055 for a center senior staff teacher, $15,078 for a family child care provider, and only $23,180 for a center director.[26]

- The salaries of child care workers have failed to keep pace with the rising cost of living. Between 1994 and 1996, the cost of living in Maryland increased by 5 percent. In that same time period, the salaries of child care workers *decreased* by 2.1 percent. Family child care providers' salaries did not increase even 1 percent, and child care center directors' salaries increased only 4.7 percent.[27]

- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in Maryland—for example, almost one in five (18 percent) family child care providers in Maryland went out of business between July 1996 and June 1997.[28] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[29]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Maryland.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs, yet such programs are scarce in Maryland. In 1997, only about 66 of Maryland's 2,104 licensed child care centers (or 3 percent) were accredited.[30] Accredited programs were difficult to find in both urban and rural areas. For instance, only two of the 164 licensed centers in Baltimore listed with the state's resource and referral network, and only one of the 45 centers listed with the resource and referral network in rural Western Maryland, were accredited.[31]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Maryland face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Maryland school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Maryland families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 117,904 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Maryland live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[32]
- Maryland children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[33] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[34] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[35] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Maryland, less than half of the public schools (1,185 or 44 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[36]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Maryland.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[37] This means as many as 31,500 babies in Maryland are in child care if national patterns hold true.[38]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Maryland's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping babies grow, most states allow a single caregiver to care for too many infants and toddlers. Maryland was one of only 13 states that met recommended levels for the number of babies and toddlers a single caregiver was allowed to care for.[39]
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Maryland to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Maryland in 1997 averaged $7,919, but could cost as much as $13,520.[40]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Maryland

Number of children younger than one[41]	69,891
Number of children younger than six[42]	437,339
Number of children ages six to 17[43]	848,851
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[44]	31,500
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[45]	262,400
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[46]	66%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[47]	81%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Maryland

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[48]	336,030
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Maryland[49]	$3,848

Annual Child Care Costs in Maryland[50]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Baltimore City		Allegany, Garrett, Washington Counties	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$7,919	$13,520	$7,980	$10,140	$4,560	$7,280
4 years	$4,968	$10,660	$4,528	$9,880	$3,636	$5,200
8 years[51]	$3,654	$8,386	$3,306	$5,990	$2,612	$3,594

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Baltimore City		Allegany, Garrett, Washington Counties	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$5,330	$11,440	$4,835	$10,920	$3,992	$6,500
4 years	$4,544	$10,400	$4,159	$9,100	$3,670	$5,200
8 years	$3,606	n.a.	$3,354	n.a.	$2,684	n.a.

Many Children in Maryland Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Maryland require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children? [52]	Yes
Does Maryland require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children? [53]	Yes
Average salary for a child care center senior staff teacher in Maryland in 1997[54]	$15,055
Annual turnover rate for family child care providers in Maryland in 1996-97[55]	18%
Percentage of child care centers in Maryland that were accredited as of 1997[56]	3%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Maryland[57]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[58]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	3	3-4	Yes
18 months	3	3-5	Yes
27 months	6	4-6	Yes
3 years	10	7-10	Yes
4 years	10	8-10	Yes

Other Child Care Indicators in Maryland

Number of licensed group child care centers in 1997[59]	2,104
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[60]	12,206
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[61]	44%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from Maryland Committee for Children, Baltimore, MD; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[9] Information from Maryland Committee for Children, Baltimore, MD; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[10] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[11] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] Maryland Committee for Children, Inc., *Child Care: An Economic Paradox* (Maryland: Maryland Committee for Children, Inc., 1997), p. 5.

[14] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[15] Information on copayment from Maryland Committee for Children, April 1998 and information on food and rent costs from Maryland Committee for Children, Inc., *Child Care: An Economic Paradox* (Maryland: Maryland Committee for Children, Inc., 1997), p. 2.

[16] Information from Maryland Committee for Children, Baltimore, MD, collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[17] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[18] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[19] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[20] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[21] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[22] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools (October 16, 1997).

[23] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[24] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[25] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[26] Maryland Child Care Resource Network, *Child Care Demographics: 1998 Maryland Report* (Baltimore, MD: Maryland Committee for Children, 1998), p. 4.

[27] Maryland Committee for Children, Inc., *Child Care: An Economic Paradox* (Maryland: Maryland Committee for Children, Inc., 1997), p. 5.

[28] Information from Maryland Committee for Children, Baltimore, MD; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[29] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[30] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[31] Information from the Maryland Committee for Children, Baltimore, MD; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[32] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[33] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[34] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[35] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[36] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[37] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[38] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[39] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[40] Information from Maryland Committee for Children, Baltimore, MD; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[41] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[42] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[43] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[44] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[45] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[46] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[47] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[48] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[49] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[50] Information from Maryland Committee for Children, Baltimore, MD; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[51] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[52] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing.* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[53] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing.* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[54] Maryland Child Care Resource Network, *Child Care Demographics: 1998 Maryland Report* (Baltimore, MD: Maryland Committee for Children, 1998), p. 4.

[55] Information from Maryland Committee for Children, Baltimore, MD; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[56] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Maryland State Department of Human Resources, Child Care Administration, cited in Maryland Child Care Resource Network, *Child Care Demographics: 1998 Maryland Report* (Baltimore, MD: Maryland Committee for Children, 1998), p. 3.

[57] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[58] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[59] Data from the Maryland State Department of Human Resources, Child Care Administration, cited in Maryland Child Care Resource Network, *Child Care Demographics: 1998 Maryland Report* (Baltimore, MD: Maryland Committee for Children, 1998), p. 3.

[60] Data from the Maryland State Department of Human Resources, Child Care Administration, cited in Maryland Child Care Resource Network, *Child Care Demographics: 1998 Maryland Report* (Baltimore, MD: Maryland Committee for Children, 1998), p. 3.

[61] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

MISSISSIPPI:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Mississippi parents.

- Every day, about 147,600 children younger than six are in child care in Mississippi if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.

- Most mothers in Mississippi work to help support their families. An estimated 64 percent of Mississippi mothers with children younger than six, and 73 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]

- For many mothers in Mississippi and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5] One out of every three Mississippi families with children is headed by a single mother—three-quarters of these female-headed families have preschool-age children.[6]

- In *Working Mother* magazine's 1997 report on child care in each state, Mississippi ranked (with Idaho and Louisiana) at the bottom of the list. Mississippi received the lowest rating in all four categories examined: quality, safety, state commitment to child care, and child care availability.[7]

- In a 1991 survey of 1,000 Mississippians conducted by the Mississippi State University Social Science Research Center, the overwhelming majority expressed support for investments in child care.
  - ⇒ More than nine out of 10 agreed that child care can give children a positive attitude toward learning.
  - ⇒ Four out of five believed that child care is an investment in Mississippi's future, and a similar proportion stated that child care serves the dual purposes of enhancing child development and allowing parents to work.
  - ⇒ Four out of five of those interviewed agreed child care should be used to allow teen parents to stay in school.[8]

- Child care matters not just to parents, but also to employers, who realize that their employees will only be productive if they know their children are safe and well cared for while they work. The Jackson County Economic Development Fund in Mississippi conducted a survey of 108 businesses regarding the business climate and quality of life in Jackson County. Half of all the firms surveyed said that adequate child care was an issue of concern for employees that should be given attention.[9]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Mississippi.

Child care is costly for many families in Mississippi.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. For example, the average annual cost of public college tuition in Mississippi in 1997 was $2,497[10]—about four-fifths the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center.
- Many families in Mississippi earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. For example:
  - About two of every three (159,000) preschool children in Mississippi live in or near poverty.[11]
  - Families in Mississippi with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year.
  - There are about 316,020 Mississippi children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[12]
  - The state has the nation's highest percentage of children living in working poor families—approximately one in eight children.[13] During the mid-1990's, 94,000 Mississippi families with children were working but still living in poverty.[14]
- In Mississippi, child care for one four-year-old in a child care center cost an average of $3,172 in 1997, with fees as high as $3,744.[15] These expenses are for only one child. Families with more than one child in care spend significantly more.
- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in Mississippi, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *31 percent* of their income for child care.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Mississippi (1997)[16]

	Child Care Centers		Family Child Care Homes	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,406	$4,004	$2,210	$3,016
4 years	$3,172	$3,744	$2,080	$2,860
8 years[17]	$2,779	$3,163	$1,773	$2,396

Many low-income working families in Mississippi are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Mississippi only allows low-income working families with incomes below about $22,000 (for a family of three) to be eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $26,650. This cutoff is lower than in a number of nearby states, including Louisiana, Tennessee, Georgia, and Oklahoma.[18]
- Even with its low income cutoffs, Mississippi is unable to serve all eligible families who apply for assistance. The state estimates that it is only serving 5 percent to 8 percent of eligible families. Many counties have waiting lists—including Benton County and the 20-county area

including Biloxi (which is a high density area and serves many families on subsidy). Some counties have stopped taking names on their waiting lists and have frozen intake—for example, the 20-county area that includes Biloxi had 1,397 children on the waiting list in the beginning of the fiscal year and has stopped taking new names, and Benton County has also frozen intake.[19]

- Mississippi's waiting lists for child care assistance create hardships for many families. Research has shown that parents waiting for child care assistance are likely to face serious financial difficulties, have difficulty staying employed, go on welfare, and/or have serious concerns about the quality of their children's care.[20]

Child care is unaffordable for many working parents

Beth is a single mother in Mississippi who works at McDonald's. After paying someone $50 a week to care for her three-year-old son, she doesn't have enough money left to cover her other expenses. Seeking help at a child care program operated by a local social-service agency, Beth told the intake worker that she couldn't continue to work unless she could arrange for low-cost child care. Unfortunately, no subsidized child care slots were available at the time of her visit. As she left, Beth was faced with the choice between paying for one more week of child care to keep her job, or paying her back rent to maintain a home for herself and her son.[21]

- The situation is likely to get worse in coming years, as more families are required to move from welfare to work. In a recent survey, Mississippi reported that, without additional funds, it is not confident that it will be able to meet the demand for child care assistance generated by the increase in welfare work requirements. Furthermore, according to the state, it is likely that low-income working families who are *not* on welfare are the least likely to be served.[22]
- Mississippi does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 4 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Mississippi spent 636 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[23]

Even those Mississippi families fortunate enough to receive child care assistance often face limited options due to inadequate state policies.

- Families in Mississippi who receive child care assistance still face enormous difficulties finding providers who will take care of their children, as the amount the state will pay for care is below market prices. As of January 1998, the amount that Mississippi paid for licensed child care centers was based on the cost of care in *1995*. In contrast, Arkansas, Alabama, and Florida all paid at levels that allowed families receiving child care subsidies a broader range of choices than in Mississippi.[24] As a consequence, providers either have to ask parents to make up the difference between the amount the state will pay and the amount the provider charges (in addition to the parent fees required by the state), or refuse to take care of children receiving child care assistance.
- A recent report examining welfare recipients with jobs in 10 Mississippi counties suggests that many welfare recipients in Mississippi required to go to work under the new welfare law are selecting informal, lower-cost child care options. This study showed that almost half—47

percent—of the families with jobs used family members to care for their children.[25] Parents choose such care for many reasons—some families prefer relative care, some end up using such care because they have no other choice (for example because no providers in their community will accept subsidies due to low state payment levels), and some are not given good information about the range of choices they have. It is essential that families only use such care when it is their choice, and not because they have no other option.

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Mississippi are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Mississippi affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[26] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[27] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[28]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Mississippi.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Mississippi's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Mississippi—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Mississippi's children from harm.

- Mississippi is one of the many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, for example, the state did not meet recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for *any* of the six age groups examined.[29] The state has some the worst ratios in the country, allowing a caregiver in a center to care for as many as 14 three-year-olds or 16 four-year-olds alone, although experts recommend no more than seven to 10. This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.

- Mississippi allows individuals caring for as many as five unrelated children in their homes to operate without having to meet *any* licensing health and safety protections.[30] This means that a provider with a history of child abuse could legally care for as many as five children in his/her home, and that a program could legally operate with safety hazards such as uncovered electrical outlets or poisonous substances that are not locked away.

- Furthermore, providers in Mississippi can care for more than five children in their homes without having to meet basic health and safety protections if the children are related. In one case, a woman in Mississippi was taking care of 17 children in her home by herself, which was legal under state law because all the children were related to her in some way.[31] It is highly unlikely that these children were getting the one-on-one attention that they need to thrive, and is alarming to imagine what would happen in this situation in case of an emergency or illness.

- Periodic inspections by licensing staff are one of the most important ways to ensure the safety and well-being of children in licensed child care programs, as the inspections allow licensers to detect unsafe situations such as safety risks, unsanitary practices, and too many children per adult to supervise adequately. Yet the child care programs that *are* subject to licensing requirements are often not inspected due to a lack of licensing staff. Mississippi currently has nine licensing staff for 1600 centers, leaving each staff member with a caseload of about 180 centers (well above the southeastern average caseload of 50 to 70 centers per monitor). Mississippi has too few monitors to renew existing licenses, much less to investigate when providers are operating without the required license.[32]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[33] Mississippi is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[34] It is also one of 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior training.[35]
- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[36] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Mississippi was only $10,860 (only slightly above minimum wage)[37] and national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[38]
- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers; nationwide, about one-third of child care teachers leave their centers each year.[39] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[40]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Mississippi.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in Mississippi. In 1997, only about 31 of Mississippi's 1,546 licensed child care centers (or 2 percent) were accredited.[41]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Mississippi face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

Many families in Mississippi have trouble finding good child care in their communities.

- A local expert reports that there are no licensed child care providers in many areas throughout Mississippi, and that working parents in many rural areas have few options.[42] For example, in 1996, there were no licensed child care centers in Amite County.[43]

366

Mississippi parents worry about who will care for their children

"I'm going to have to quit my job if I can't find someone to watch Dorothy." The story came slowly and painfully. A shift change meant reporting for work at 6 a.m., rather than 11:00 a.m. "Before, I had time before work to go up and down the street and see who was going to be home for the day. Now, everyone's asleep. It's too early to find someone to keep her," Dorothy's mother, Wanda, shared. Wanda hopes that she can hang on long enough for Dorothy, who is four, to start school. "I want to work. I don't want to be on welfare," Wanda said. While Wanda's situation will be somewhat easier once Dorothy starts kindergarten, Wanda will still face a child care challenge. She plans to hire neighborhood children to baby-sit after school, but she knows that children are not the most reliable caregivers. She is afraid that Dorothy may be left home alone. "I'm afraid something bad is going to happen to her. Lately, I've been thinking about trying to work nights. Then she would just be alone while she's sleeping. But what if someone breaks in or there is a fire?"[44]

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Mississippi school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Mississippi families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 170,371 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Mississippi live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[45]
- Mississippi children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[46] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[47] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[48] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Mississippi, for example, only one out of 10 public schools (957 or 11 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[49]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Mississippi.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[50] This means as many as 17,900 babies in Mississippi are in child care if national patterns hold true.[51]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Mississippi's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.

- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping very young children grow, Mississippi allows a single caregiver to care for *nine* 18-month-old toddlers. In comparison, early childhood educators recommend that a single caregiver be responsible for no more than three to five toddlers this age.[52] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, diaper, play, and care for nine active 18-month-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency such as a fire.

- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Mississippi to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Mississippi in 1997 averaged $3,406, but could cost as much as $4,004.[53]

Other families in Mississippi face shortages of care as well—such as families where the parents work nontraditional hours and families trying to move off welfare.

- With the opening of the casino business on the Gulf Coast of Mississippi, there has been an increased need for child care at odd hours, specifically during the graveyard shifts that many parents in the industry work.[54] The poultry industry in Mississippi has also increased the need for evening and overnight care.[55] However, care during these hours is difficult to find. For instance, in Biloxi, which has a growing casino industry, there is only one child care provider who offers care 24 hours a day.[56]

- Many families trying to move off welfare find jobs requiring them to work nonstandard hours. The challenges these families face in finding child care are illustrated by the experience of a group of women on the Delta in Mississippi. The women gather at 4:00 a.m. to travel by bus for two hours to their assigned work places, work their full day, and then return, another two hours, home each night. They are not only having trouble finding care available at these nontraditional hours, but are having difficulty finding quality care for that extended amount of time.[57]

Parents cannot move from welfare to work without affordable, quality care

Patricia Watson, 34, found that the welfare-to-work program in which she was involved in Mississippi put her in a child-care bind. Patricia is a divorced mother, who had adopted her niece, Jasmine, at birth. She had been placed in a job in the Springwater catfish plant. Since Ms. Watson had to catch the 6:30 a.m. bus to work, she entrusted a teen-age relative to take six-year-old Jasmine to school and watch her afterward. When Ms. Watson returned late in the afternoon, the teen-ager had not even realized the child was missing. "I was scared to death," Ms. Watson said. "I said, 'Oh, Lord, somebody's walked off with my baby!'" Ms. Watson began a house-by-house search, and discovered her daughter a half-hour later, playing with a friend down the block. She quit the plant, lost her welfare benefits and is relying on her mother for now.[58]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Mississippi

Number of children younger than one[59]	39,698
Number of children younger than six[60]	245,955
Number of children ages six to 17[61]	46,184
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[62]	17,900
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[63]	147,600
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[64]	64%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[65]	73%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Mississippi

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[66]	316,020
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Mississippi[67]	$2,497

Annual Child Care Costs in Mississippi (1997)[68]

	Child Care Centers		Family Child Care Homes	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,406	$4,004	$2,210	$3,016
4 years	$3,172	$3,744	$2,080	$2,860
8 years[69]	$2,779	$3,163	$1,773	$2,396

Many Children in Mississippi Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Mississippi require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children? [70]	No
Does Mississippi require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children? [71]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in Mississippi in 1996[72]	$10,860
Percentage of child care centers in Mississippi that were accredited as of 1997[73]	2%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Mississippi[74]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[75]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	5	3-4	No
18 months	9	3-5	No
27 months	12	4-6	No
3 years	14	7-10	No
4 years	16	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in Mississippi

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[76]	1,546
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[77]	163
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[78]	1,700
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[79]	11%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] KIDS COUNT Mississippi, "Deepest Spring in the Heart," *KIDS COUNT Mississippi, 1997 Data Book, Volume IV* (Jackson, MS: The Mississippi Forum on Children & Families, Inc., 1997), p. 21.

[7] Holcomb, et al., "Fifth Annual Survey: Child Care, How Does Your State Rate?," *Working Mother,* July/August 1997.

[8] Summary of Mississippi child care issues, provided by Carol Burnett from the Moore Community House in Biloxi, MS, March 1998.

[9] "Jackson County survey gives picture of business climate" *Coast Business* (Gulfport, MS: May 5, 1997) p. 6.

[10] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[11] KIDS COUNT Mississippi, "Deepest Spring in the Heart," *KIDS COUNT Mississippi, 1997 Data Book, Volume IV* (Jackson, MS: The Mississippi Forum on Children & Families, Inc., 1997), p. 20.

[12] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[13] KIDS COUNT Mississippi, "Deepest Spring in the Heart," *KIDS COUNT Mississippi, 1997 Data Book, Volume IV* (Jackson, MS: The Mississippi Forum on Children & Families, Inc., 1997), p. 20.

[14] Congregations for Children, *Their Future Is In Our Hands,* (Biloxi, MS: Moore Community House, 1997).

[15] Mississippi Department of Human Services, Office for Children and Youth, March 1998.

[16] Mississippi Department of Human Services, Office for Children and Youth, March 1998.

[17] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by the Mississippi Department of Human Services. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[18] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[19] Information on Benton County from Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998). Information on waiting lists for the 20-county area including Biloxi from a conversation with Ronnie McGinnis of the Mississippi Office of Children and Youth in the State Department of Human Services, April 29, 1998.

[20] Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, *Valuing Families: The High Cost of Waiting for Child Care Sliding Fee Assistance* (Minneapolis, MN: 1995).

[21] Congregations for Children, *Their Future Is In Our Hands* (Biloxi, MS: Moore Community House, 1997).

[22] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[23] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[24] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[25] Data from a report on the Mississippi TANF program conducted by Millsaps College for the Department of Human Services—summary information provided in a letter from Donald Taylor of the Mississippi State Department of Human Services and from communication from Carol Burnett of the Moore Community House in Biloxi.

[26] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[27] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[28] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[29] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[30] Mississippi State Department of Health, *Regulations Governing Licensure of Child Care Facilities* (Jackson, MS: MS State Department of Health, Child Care Licensure, January 8, 1997), p.2.

[31] Holcomb, et al, "Fifth Annual Survey: Child Care, How Does Your State Rate?," *Working Mother*, July/August 1997, NY.

[32] Summary of Mississippi child care issues, provided by Carol Burnett from the Moore Community House in Biloxi, MS, March 1998.

[33] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools. (October 16, 1997).

[34] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[35] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[36] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[37] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[38] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[39] National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW).

[40] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[41] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[42] Summary of Mississippi child care issues, provided by Carol Burnett from the Moore Community House in Biloxi, MS, March 1998.

[43] KIDS COUNT Mississippi, "Deepest Spring in the Heart," *KIDS COUNT Mississippi, 1997 Data Book, Volume IV* (Jackson, MS: The Mississippi Forum on Children & Families, Inc., 1997), p. 6.

[44] "And A Little Child Shall Lead Them: A Study Paper for People of Faith" from the Bishops of Mississippi's Catholic, Episcopal, and United Methodist Churches, December 1997

[45] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[46] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[47] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[48] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[49] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[50] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[51] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[52] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[53] Mississippi Department of Human Services, Office for Children and Youth, March 1998.

[54] Gillette, "Opting out of 9-5 routine, more workers finding refuge in graveyard shift" Biloxi, MS: *Mississippi Business Journal*, August 25, 1997, p. 7.

[55] Congregations for Children, *Their Future Is In Our Hands* (Biloxi, MS: Moore Community House, 1997).

[56] Conversation with Carol Burnett of the Moore Community House in Biloxi, MS, March 1998.

[57] Conversation with Carol Burnett of the Moore Community House in Biloxi, MS, March 1998.

[58] DeParle, "What about Mississippi? A special report," *The New York Times*, (NY, NY: October 16, 1997) p. A-1

[59] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[60] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[61] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[62] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[63] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[64] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[65] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[66] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[67] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[68] Mississippi Department of Human Services, Office for Children and Youth, March 1998.

[69] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by the Mississippi Department of Human Services. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[70] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[71] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[72] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[73] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[74] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[75] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[76] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[77] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[78] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[79] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

NORTH CAROLINA:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many North Carolina parents.

- Every day, about 372,700 children younger than six are in child care in North Carolina if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in North Carolina work to help support their families. An estimated 67 percent of North Carolina mothers with children younger than six, and 80 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2] Approximately 376,600 children under six in North Carolina live in families where either their sole parent or both parents are working.[3]
- For many mothers in North Carolina and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[4] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[5] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[6]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in North Carolina.

Child care is costly for many families in North Carolina.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in North Carolina in 1997 was $1,841[7]—half the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center.
- Many families in North Carolina earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. For example:
    - ⇒ Families in North Carolina with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year.
    - ⇒ Nearly 400,000 North Carolinians live in families who have a working parent and whose incomes still fall below the poverty line (for example, below $13,330 for a family of three in 1997). The number of working poor families has increased over the past two decades and poor North Carolinians are more likely to be working than the poor in many other states. (More than three-quarters [78 percent] of poor families with children in North Carolina had a worker in the family, far above the national average of 65 percent.)[8]

- In North Carolina, child care for one four-year-old in a child care center cost an average of $3,696 in 1997. Child care is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. For example, the average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Wake County was $5,068, and the average cost in Davidson County was $3,650.[9] These expenses are for only one child—families with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Average Annual Cost of Child Care in North Carolina[10]

Child Care Centers (1997)

Age of child	Statewide	Wake County	Davidson County
12 months	$4,776	$5,836	$4,011
4 years	$3,696	$5,068	$3,650
8 years[11]	n.a.	$3,304	$1,818

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

Age of child	Statewide	Wake County	Davidson County
12 months	$3,936	$5,068	$3,939
4 years	$3,648	$5,008	$3,651
8 years	n.a.	$3,289	$2,396

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in North Carolina, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *40 percent* of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in North Carolina are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- While North Carolina spends $3,583 per student in kindergarten through 12th grade, $3,629 for each student in the state's community colleges, and $9,848 for each student in the UNC system, the state only provides $209 for each preschool student.[12]
- North Carolina allows only low-income working families earning less than $28,092 (for a family of three) to be eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $33,820.[13]
- Many North Carolina families who are eligible and apply for child care assistance are unable to get it because of insufficient funds. Between September and November 1997, the state's waiting lists for child care subsidies doubled,[14] and as of December, the list included a total of 11,500 children.[15] Research has shown that parents waiting for child care assistance are likely to face serious financial difficulties, have difficulty staying employed, go on welfare, and/or to have serious concerns about their children's care because they cannot afford higher quality care.[16]
- The situation is likely to get worse in coming years, as more families are required to move from welfare to work. In a recent survey, North Carolina reported that, without additional funds, it is not confident that it will be able to meet the demand for child care assistance generated by the increase in welfare work requirements.[17] Low-income working families who are *not* on welfare may end up losing assistance as more families on welfare need help.

Child care assistance helps working parents overcome challenges

Tara, a North Carolina mother, put her twins on a waiting list for child care subsidies a month after they were born, but had to wait until they were 15 months old before she received any financial support for child care. During that time, she had trouble finding affordable, good quality child care in either a home or center. She was constantly worried about how her children were doing and used four different child care situations searching for a better provider that she could afford. Now that she is finally receiving child care assistance, she is able to put the twins in a child care home with which she feels comfortable, and she knows they are receiving good care. She is very happy about her situation. She has even been able to make house payments on a modest home. She said child care subsidy is a great thing. People who are waiting for it only need to be patient as "It's all worth it."[18]

* * * * *

While waiting for child care assistance, a North Carolina father was struggling to come up with $300 for child care out of his monthly income of $700 to $800. Now he is receiving child care assistance, has an income of $1000 per month (about $12,000 per year) and is paying $102 per month for child care. Because of the help, he can now pay his bills, and has been able to open a checking and savings account (including a small savings account for his little boy).[19]

- In North Carolina, almost 66,000 children under five were living in families receiving welfare in November 1996. Many of these children will need child care in order for their families to move from welfare to work.[20] A recent North Carolina study suggests that investing in child care subsidies will help welfare reform efforts—preliminary findings indicate that those North Carolina counties with greater investments in child care subsidies will experience greater success moving families from welfare to work than those that provide little or no support.[21]
- Two studies of the impact of child care subsidies in North Carolina show that child care is a cost-effective approach to helping families:
  - ⇒ A recent study of child care in North Carolina estimated that Orange County is realizing a $9 return for every $1 invested in child care subsidies by Orange County's Partnership for Young Children, as child care subsidies allow families to work and to contribute their skills and taxes in making Orange County a more vital community.[22]
  - ⇒ A study of the economic impact of providing child care subsidies in the state estimated that when a child care subsidy allows a parent to work at a job earning $20,000 annually, the federal, state, and local governments can expect to earn $3,492 above the cost of the subsidy in tax revenue from the family's income and expenditures.[23]
- North Carolina does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 58 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, North Carolina spent 46 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[24]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in North Carolina are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in North Carolina affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[25] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[26] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[27]

Parents have a hard time finding quality care that they can afford

"I have had children in child care for the last 12 years. I can honestly say that good child care, not even great child care is very hard to come by. I have been calling pre-schools in my area off and on for six months and there are no openings. They all have waiting lists ... I constantly worry about my children in daycare and the care that they are receiving.... It takes everything we earn to pay for our house, food, transportation, and childcare. Something has got to change...."[28]

Cheryl, a 35-year-old mother from Fayetteville

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in North Carolina.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of North Carolina's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, North Carolina—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect North Carolina's children from harm.

- North Carolina is one of the many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, for example, the state did not meet recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for *any* of the six age groups examined.[29] The state allowed a caregiver in a center to care for as many as 15 three-year-olds or 20 four-year-olds alone, although early childhood experts recommend no more than seven to 10. This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.

- In North Carolina, any program which operates less than four hours per day or only during the summer does not have to be regulated, regardless of how many children in the program.[30] This means, for example, that a provider with a history of child abuse could legally care for any number of children for the entire summer, and that a program could legally operate with safety hazards such as uncovered electrical outlets or poisonous substances that are not locked away.

- Periodic inspections by licensing staff are one of the most important ways to ensure the safety and well-being of children in licensed child care programs, as the inspections allow licensers to detect unsafe situations such as safety risks, unsanitary practices, and too many children per

- Periodic inspections by licensing staff are one of the most important ways to ensure the safety and well-being of children in licensed child care programs, as the inspections allow licensers to detect unsafe situations such as safety risks, unsanitary practices, and too many children per adult to supervise adequately. Yet in North Carolina, there are only fifty licensing consultants to cover 3,688 child care centers and 5,000 family child care providers—giving each consultant an average caseload of 174 child care programs.[31] With such limited staffing, it is difficult to ensure the basic health and safety of children in child care.
- North Carolina does not adequately enforce its regulations. Although parent complaints are investigated, the complaints are substantiated, and violations are cited, local experts observe that there is often little or no consequence for the offending child care program. Occasionally, a fine may be levied, but a program is almost never closed down and sometimes compliance is determined through written documentation instead of follow-up visits. Moreover, it is difficult for parents to obtain information about violations.[32]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[33] North Carolina is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[34] It is also one of 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior training.[35]

> *"You have to have more training to feed the animals at the zoo than you do to take care of children in day care—and that's just not right."*
>
> *Talitha Wright, section chief,*
> *North Carolina's Division of Child Development*[36]

- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[37] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in North Carolina was only $12,820.[38] Many teachers earned less—in the mid-1990's, half of North Carolina's child care teachers were earning less than $10,500 and half of center directors were earning less than $17,420. Family child care providers had particularly low salaries, as the majority made under $8,000 per year.[39]
- Child care providers not only earn low wages, they also are unlikely to have benefits. In North Carolina, only 38 percent of child care centers offer their staff health insurance benefits.[40]
- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in North Carolina—in the mid-1990's, for example, the turnover rate for child care teachers statewide was 44 percent.[41] In contrast, turnover rate for public school teachers nationwide is only 6.6 percent.[42]

Average Annual Salaries for Child Care Providers in Selected North Carolina Counties[43]

County	Child Care Teachers	Family Child Care Providers
Catawba County (1997)	$12,000	$ 7,340
Davidson County (1996)	$10,600	$ 6,920
Forsyth County (1996)	$10,500	$10,640
Nash/Edgcomb Counties (1996)	$10,000	$ 6,660
New Hanover County (1997)	$11,540	$11,120
Robeson County (1997)	$10,400	$ 6,580
Wake County (1997)	$13,560	$11,140

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in North Carolina.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in North Carolina. In 1997, only about 112 of North Carolina's 3,551 licensed child care centers (or 3 percent) were accredited.[44] Accredited programs were difficult to find in communities throughout the state, but particularly rare among rural communities; only 14 of Wake County's 190 centers are accredited and none of Davidson County's 51 centers are accredited.[45]
- Only about one in four preschool-age children cared for in child care centers in North Carolina are enrolled in centers that meet the higher standards required for an "AA" license. A large majority of North Carolina child care centers meet only the minimal health and safety requirement needed for a regular "A" license.[46]

Investments in child care can improve the quality of care

According to UNC researchers, Smart Start—the North Carolina statewide program aimed at preparing children to succeed in school—has improved child care in the first counties to receive money from the program. During a year-and-a-half period, evaluators from the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center at UNC watched child care workers interact with children in 18 North Carolina counties. The study found that the percentage of "good" centers jumped from 14 percent to 25 percent in that time.[47]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across North Carolina face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many North Carolina school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many North Carolina families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 216,298 school-age children (ages five to 17) in North Carolina live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[48]

- North Carolina children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[49] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[50] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[51] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In North Carolina, for example, only about two in five public schools (1,927 or 43 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[52]

Many North Carolina families searching for school-age care need help affording the care their children need

A single mother in North Carolina did not feel her two children, ages nine and seven, were safe at home without her while they waited for her to get home from work. "There's so much going on now, I would worry about some stranger following them into the house." She has finally been able to place her children in a regulated center, but only after a year spent waiting for child care subsidies. "It's healthy for them to be in a day care center. They can communicate with other kids and play and stuff. It's an important part of growing up. They used to just come home and watch TV. Now they play with other kids and start on their homework. Working people need this. I couldn't afford to pay for them to go to this day care on my own. This is helping to keep them safe, and I feel better about going to work."[53]

* * * * * * *

Juanita, a North Carolina mother, is on the top of the list to receive a subsidy for her three older sons as soon as she can find after-school programs in a child care center for them. However, there is no one offering licensed after-school care in the area in which she lives. She is clearly frustrated by the fact that she cannot find even one center with after-school care.... She is concerned that the children are left unattended after school before she gets home, and she found them skipping school because they are left unattended in the morning before school when she goes to work.[54]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in North Carolina.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[55] This means as many as 44,600 babies in North Carolina are in child care if national patterns hold true.[56]

- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care North Carolina's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave

- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping very young children grow, North Carolina allows a single caregiver to care for six 18-month-old toddlers. In comparison, early childhood experts recommend that a single caregiver be responsible for no more than three to five toddlers.[57] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, diaper, play, and care for six active 18-month-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency such as a fire.

> *"I think sometimes the ratios are way too high—they're asking an awful lot of one person. I know there are infants lying in their cribs crying because their teacher is too busy to get to them."*[58]
>
> *Karen E., a mother of two from Charlotte*

- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in North Carolina to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in North Carolina in 1997 averaged $4,776, and was even more expensive in areas such as Wake County, where the average cost was $5,836.[59]

- North Carolina parents are struggling to find infant/toddler care. A recent set of parent evaluations found that after six weeks of searching, 59 percent of parents with infants and 43 percent of parents with one-year-olds had not yet found care. Finding *high quality* infant/toddler spaces is even more difficult. Of the 369 infants and toddlers enrolled in regulated programs in Orange County in March 1997, only 18 percent were enrolled in NAEYC-accredited centers or NAFCC-accredited homes.[60]

Other families in North Carolina face shortages of care as well—such as families where parents work nontraditional hours.

- Parents working hours other than the typical "9-to-5" shift have particular difficulty finding the child care they need. According to October 1997 data from the North Carolina Department of Human Resources, only about 17 percent of the spaces in registered family child care homes and centers were available during second shift hours and just 4 percent were available during third shift.[61]

- The shortage of care during hours when parents need it is apparent in counties throughout North Carolina. For instance, in Orange County, most child care programs operate between 7:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., but even parents working first shift often find these hours unmanageable. Less than one-fourth of the regulated centers and homes in Orange County are open either early or late and less than 10 percent are open both early and late.[62]

Parents with children with special needs face enormous challenges finding child care so they can work

The possibility that a before- and after-school program in Greensboro that cares for children with special needs would be closed revealed the enormous challenges faced by working families relying on such programs. As described in the Greensboro News and Record, Azell Reeves' eight-year-old son Timothy is severely mentally handicapped, is unable to walk or operate his wheelchair, and is not potty trained. He obviously cannot be left alone. Reeves knows that no regular day care center will take him, because she has tried. She is only able to work because of the county's before-and-after school program, and its daylong summer program, that serves as a child care program for mentally handicapped children at the Kendall Center. But the county is threatening to close the program. "We're working families," she told the board. "You want us to go on welfare?" She explained that she and many other parents would have to quit their jobs to take care of their children. Linda Davidson of Greensboro is another working parent who depends on the county program in order to work. She is terrified that she will have to quit her job if the program closes.

The county's Mental Health Department offered instead to provide free training to regular day care centers that would be willing to take some of the children. But this solution would not work for families like Linda Davidson's. Davidson said that even if she could afford regular day care, she knows no one would take her seven-year-old son, Robbie. Even with his medication, he is hard to handle, and he has 30-minute screaming and kicking fits. "Robbie has even been forever banned from some day cares because they can't handle him," she said. "Schools have thrown out my son after two hours. I don't know what to do. I'm shaking just thinking about it."[63]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in North Carolina

Number of children younger than one[64]	99,026
Number of children younger than six[65]	621,140
Number of children ages six to 17[66]	1,212,477
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[67]	44,600
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[68]	372,700
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[69]	67%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[70]	80%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in North Carolina

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[71]	495,420
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in North Carolina[72]	$1,841

Average Annual Child Care Costs in North Carolina[73]

Child Care Centers (1997)

Age of child	Statewide	Wake County	Davidson County
12 months	$4,776	$5,836	$4,011
4 years	$3,696	$5,068	$3,650
8 years[74]	n.a.	$3,304	$1,818

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

Age of Child	Statewide	Wake County	Davidson County
12 months	$3,936	$5,068	$3,939
4 years	$3,648	$5,008	$3,651
8 years	n.a.	$3,289	$2,396

Many Children in North Carolina Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does North Carolina require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[75]	No
Does North Carolina require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[76]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in North Carolina in 1996[77]	$12,820
Annual turnover rate for child care teachers in North Carolina in 1992-93[78]	44%
Percentage of child care centers in North Carolina that were accredited as of 1997[79]	3%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in North Carolina[80]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[81]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	5	3-4	No
18 months	6	3-5	No
27 months	10	4-6	No
3 years	15	7-10	No
4 years	20	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in North Carolina

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[82]	3,551
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[83]	275
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[84]	4,549
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[85]	43%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Day Care Services Association, *Child Care in North Carolina—Fact Sheet,* Chapel Hill, NC: Day Care Services Association, January 1997.

[4] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[5] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[6] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[7] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[8] The North Carolina Budget and Tax Center, "Working for a Living in North Carolina, Executive Summary," *BTC Reports, The Newsletter of the North Carolina Budget and Tax Center*, Vol. 3, No. 16. (Raleigh, NC: The North Carolina Budget and Tax Center, October 1997), p. 3.

[9] Information from Day Care Services Association, Chapel Hill, NC; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[10] Information from Day Care Services Association, Chapel Hill, NC; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[11] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[12] Simmons and Sheehan, "Too little, too late—How North Carolina Fails Its Youngest Children," Raleigh, NC: *The News and Observer*, February 18, 1997, p.14.

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Ahearn, "Crisis: The Story Right Under Our Noses," Greensboro, NC: *News and Record*, November 30, 1997, p. B1.

[15] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[16] Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, *Valuing Families: The High Cost of Waiting for Child Care Sliding Fee Assistance* (Minneapolis, MN: 1995); and Phillips, *Child Care for Low-Income Families: A Summary of Two Workshops* (Washington, DC: Board on Children and Families, National Research Council, 1995).

[17] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[18] Information from Day Care Services Association, Chapel Hill, NC; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[19] Information from Day Care Services Association, Chapel Hill, NC; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[20] Day Care Services Association, *Child Care in North Carolina—Fact Sheet,* Chapel Hill, NC: Day Care Services Association, January 1997.

[21] Rohacek and Russell, *Child Care Subsidy: An Investment Strategy for North Carolina* (Carrboro, NC: Day Care Services Association, December 1996), p. 9.

[22] Rivest, "Developing the Future Work Force in Orange County," *Business Today*, (Chapel Hill, NC: Chapel Hill Chamber of Commerce, April 1997), p. 8.

[23] Rohacek, et al., *Child Care Subsidy: An Investment Strategy for North Carolina—Executive Summary* (Carrboro, NC: Day Care Services Association, December 1996), p. 1.

[24] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[25] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[26] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[27] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[28] From Lifetime Television's online project "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment" which collects stories about child care from families around the country. It is found at www.lifetimetv.com.

[29] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[30] Information from Day Care Services Association, Chapel Hill, NC; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[31] Information from the North Carolina Division of Child Development.

[32] Information from Day Care Services Association, Chapel Hill, NC; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[33] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools (October 16, 1997).

[34] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[35] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[36] Simmons and Sheehan, "Too little, too late—How North Carolina Fails Its Youngest Children," Raleigh, NC: *The News and Observer*, February 18, 1997, p. 10.

[37] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[38] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[39] Data compiled from two studies of North Carolina's Child Care Workforce, 1992, 1993, and from a three-part study of Wake County's Child Care Workforce, 1997, Day Care Services Association, Chapel Hill, NC.

[40] Data compiled from two studies of North Carolina's Child Care Workforce, 1992, 1993, and from a three-part study of Wake County's Child Care Workforce, 1997, Day Care Services Association, Chapel Hill, NC.

[41] Data compiled from two studies of North Carolina's Child Care Workforce, 1992, 1993, and from a three-part study of Wake County's Child Care Workforce, 1997, Day Care Services Association, Chapel Hill, NC.

[42] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[43] *North Carolina's Early Childhood Work Environment,* Day Care Services Association, Chapel Hill, NC, as reported in Center for the Child Care Workforce, *Current Data on Child Care Salaries and Benefits in the United States* (Washington, DC: Center for the Child Care Workforce, March 1998).

[44] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[45] Information from Day Care Services Association, Chapel Hill, NC; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[46] Day Care Services Association, *Child Care in North Carolina—Fact Sheet*, Chapel Hill, NC: Day Care Services Association, January 1997.

[47] Murrell, "Study praises Smart Start," Chapel Hill, NC: *The Chapel Hill Herald*, April 23, 1997, p. 1.

[48] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[49] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[50] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[51] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[52] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[53] Information from Day Care Services Association, Chapel Hill, NC; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[54] Information from Day Care Services Association, Chapel Hill, NC; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[55] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[56] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[57] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[58] Gibbs, "Hunt plan would boost training, revise licensing and inspections," Charlotte, NC: *The Charlotte Observer*, April 10, 1997, p. 5C.

[59] Information from Day Care Services Association, Chapel Hill, NC; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[60] Information from Day Care Services Association, Chapel Hill, NC; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[61] Information from Day Care Services Association, Chapel Hill, NC; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[62] Information from Day Care Services Association, Chapel Hill, NC; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[63] McKay, Rich, "Budget cuts target day care," *Greensboro News and Record*, April 15, 1998.

[64] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[65] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[66] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[67] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[68] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[69] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[70] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[71] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995*. Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[72] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[73] Information from Day Care Services Association, Chapel Hill, NC, collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[74] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[75] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[76] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[77] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[78] Data compiled from two studies of North Carolina's Child Care Workforce, 1992, 1993, and from a three-part study of Wake County's Child Care Workforce, 1997, Day Care Services Association, Chapel Hill, NC.

[79] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[80] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[81] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[82] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[83] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[84] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[85] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

OKLAHOMA:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Oklahoma parents.

- Every day, about 165,600 children younger than six are in child care in Oklahoma if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Oklahoma work to help support their families. An estimated 59 percent of Oklahoma mothers with children younger than six, and 74 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Oklahoma and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Oklahoma.

Child care is costly for many families in Oklahoma.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Oklahoma in 1997 was $1,936[6]—just over half the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center.
- Many families in Oklahoma earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Oklahoma with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 331,200 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[7]
- In Oklahoma, child care for one four-year-old in a child care center cost an average of $3,536 in 1996. Child care is expensive for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. The average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in urban areas of the state (Tulsa, Oklahoma, Cleveland, and Canadian Counties) was $4,056 and the average cost in the state's 59 rural counties was $2,808.[8] These expenses are for only one child—families with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Average Annual Cost of Child Care in Oklahoma[9]

Child Care Centers (1996)

Age of child	Statewide	Urban Counties	Rural Counties
12 months	$3,952	$4,628	$3,068
4 years	$3,536	$4,056	$2,808
8 years[10]	$2,612	$4,244	$3,217

Family Child Care Homes (1996)

Age of child	Statewide	Urban Counties	Rural Counties
12 months	$3,432	$3,536	$3,068
4 years	$3,120	$3,276	$2,808
8 years	$3,882	$3,628	$3,286

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in Oklahoma, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *35 percent* of their income for child care

Many low-income working families in Oklahoma are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Oklahoma allows only low-income working families with incomes below $24,672 (for a family of three) to be eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $30,076. This income cutoff is lower than that in a number of other states, including nearby states such as New Mexico and Louisiana.[11]
- Even with Oklahoma's low income cutoffs, the state reports that it is not confident that all eligible families know they can get child care assistance, or that it could serve all eligible families if they did know they could get child care help.[12]
- Oklahoma does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 79 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Oklahoma spent 33 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[13]

Oklahoma families receiving child care assistance still face financial hardship and limited options due to inadequate state policies.

- Oklahoma reimburses providers for subsidized care at a rate that is lower than the rate charged by many providers in each community, which greatly limits the options of low-income parents trying to find quality care for their children. For instance, the state pays a maximum of $14 per day for licensed infant care, which is lower than the average price statewide for infant care.[14] As a result, many day care centers, fearing they will not be paid, simply refuse to take infants.[15]
- Oklahoma's payment rates are lower than those of many other states. As of January 1998, the maximum amount that Oklahoma would pay for child care for a four-year-old in a center was the second lowest in the country—only West Virginia paid less.[16]

Low state rates for child care subsidies leave parents with limited options

Phyllis Reynolds is a 31-year-old mother of three. Her children have been staying with a neighbor, who keeps as many as 10 children a day in her two-bedroom house. Phyllis is hoping to receive a higher child care subsidy so she afford higher quality care. "I want to put them somewhere they can learn something, if I can pay for it," she said.[17]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Oklahoma are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Oklahoma affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[18] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[19] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[20]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Oklahoma.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Oklahoma's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Oklahoma—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Oklahoma's children from harm.
- Oklahoma is one of the many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, for example, Oklahoma met recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for only two of the six age groups examined.[21] The state allowed a caregiver in a center to care for as many as 12 three-year-olds or 15 four-year-olds alone, although early childhood experts recommend no more than seven to 10. This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[22] Oklahoma is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[23] It is also one of 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior training.[24]
- A 1995 study of the Oklahoma child care workforce found that the typical caregiver in a child care center had only one year of education beyond high school, and a typical family child care

provider had slightly less.[25] Only about one out of four providers in child care centers had the training required for some form of early childhood certification (such as Child Development Associate credentials).[26] Family child care providers were even less likely to have such credentials, with only 8 percent holding certification of any kind.[27]

Oklahoma families struggle to find quality care

Connie, a 32-year-old single mother from Del City, writes of the challenges she faces in finding good quality child care: "I have a two-year-old child in day care. It is difficult as a single parent to find day care that is quality and affordable. I had my child in one that, even though signs were posted on cabinets and refrigerator that he was allergic to milk, they kept giving him milk. There are no guidelines for these providers. No mandatory schooling. Most of the people in daycare centers in my area are students that work part-time. They don't have any formal education to deal with a child's development. We need this in order for our children to be well cared for.[28]

- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[29] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Oklahoma was only $12,480.[30] Furthermore, national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[31]

- The salaries of family child care providers are particularly low, with most earning poverty-level wages. According to a 1995 study, over half of Oklahoma family child care providers earned less than $11,000 annually from their family child care business, and more than one-third earned less than $5,000 annually. Given that the providers worked long hours (an average of 57 hours per week), the study calculated that they earn just $1.93 per hour.[32]

- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in Oklahoma—about one in four (26 percent) of Oklahoma's family child care providers go out of business each year.[33] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[34]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Oklahoma.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in Oklahoma. In 1997, only about 40 of Oklahoma's 1,768 licensed child care centers (or 2 percent) were accredited.[35]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Oklahoma face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Oklahoma school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Oklahoma families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 143,240 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Oklahoma live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[36]

- Oklahoma children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[37] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[38] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[39] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.

- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Oklahoma, only one in six public schools (1,763 or 17 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[40]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Oklahoma.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[41] This means as many as 19,900 babies in Oklahoma are in child care if national patterns hold true.[42]

- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Oklahoma's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.

- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping very young children grow, Oklahoma allows a single caregiver to care for six 18-month-old toddlers. In contrast, early childhood experts recommend that one adult care for no more than three to five toddlers this age.[43] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, diaper, play, and care for six active 18-month-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency such as a fire.

- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Oklahoma to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in 1996 averaged $3,952 for the state as a whole, and cost an average of $4,628 in urban areas.[44]

- Families receiving child care assistance who have infants face particular difficulties in finding care. The Oklahoma City child care resource and referral (CCR&R) agency received a significant number of calls from families receiving child care assistance who had infants—such calls made up a quarter of all of the calls the CCR&R received from parents with infants. Yet the CCR&R reports that providers are least likely to accept infants receiving child care assistance due to high cost of care and low state subsidy payments.[45]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Oklahoma

Number of children younger than one[46]	44,233
Number of children younger than six[47]	276,019
Number of children ages six to 17[48]	604,777
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[49]	19,900
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[50]	165,600
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[51]	59%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[52]	74%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Oklahoma

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[53]	331,200
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Oklahoma[54]	$1,936

Average Annual Child Care Costs in Oklahoma[55]

Child Care Centers (1996)

Age of Child	Statewide	Urban Counties	Rural Counties
12 months	$3,952	$4,628	$3,068
4 years	$3,536	$4,056	$2,808
8 years[56]	$2,612	$4,244	$3,217

Family Child Care Homes (1996)

Age of Child	Statewide	Urban Counties	Rural Counties
12 months	$3,432	$3,536	$3,068
4 years	$3,120	$3,276	$2,808
8 years	$3,882	$3,628	$3,286

Many Children in Oklahoma Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Oklahoma require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[57]	No
Does Oklahoma require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[58]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in Oklahoma in 1996[59]	$12,480
Annual turnover rate for family child care providers in Oklahoma[60]	26%
Percentage of child care centers in Oklahoma that were accredited as of 1997[61]	2%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Oklahoma[62]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[63]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	6	3-5	No
27 months	8	4-6	No
3 years	12	7-10	No
4 years	15	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in Oklahoma

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[64]	1,768
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[65]	4,022
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[66]	17%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Oklahoma, City, OK; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[9] Information from Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Oklahoma, City, OK; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[10] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[11] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[14] If a center or home meets the criteria necessary for a two-star rating, it can receive a higher reimbursement rate—for example, $19 per day for infant care in high rate areas. (Information provided by Dale Wares at the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, April 28, 1998.)

[15] Saucier, "Protecting Children: Former Welfare Moms Can't Afford Day Care," Tulsa, OK: *Tulsa World*, April 28, 1997, p. A-11.

[16] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[17] Overall, "Where Are the Children?," Tulsa, OK: *Tulsa World*, July 12, 1997.

[18] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[19] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[20] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[21] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[22] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools (October 16, 1997).

[23] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[24] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[25] Dunn, *Professional Development Status of the Oklahoma Child Care Workforce* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma, 1995).

[26] Dunn, *Professional Development Status of the Oklahoma Child Care Workforce* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma, 1995).

[27] Such as a State Department of Education certification, a Child Development Associate Credential, or a Montessori Certificate. Dunn and Tabor, *Family Child Care Providers* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma, 1995).

[28] From Lifetime Television's on-line project "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment" which collects stories about child care from families around the country. It is found at www.lifetimetv.com.

[29] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[30] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[31] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[32] Dunn and Tabor, *Family Child Care Providers* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma, 1995).

[33] Information from Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Oklahoma, City, OK; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[34] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[35] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[36] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[37] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[38] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[39] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[40] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[41] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[42] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[43] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[44] Information from Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Oklahoma, City, OK; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[45] Information from Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Oklahoma, City, OK; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[46] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[47] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[48] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[49] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[50] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[51] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[52] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[53] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (U.S. Department of Commerce. Washington, DC)

[54] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[55] Information from Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Oklahoma, City, OK; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[56] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[57] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[58] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[59] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[60] Information from Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Oklahoma, City, OK; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[61] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[62] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[63] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[64] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[65] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[66] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

SOUTH CAROLINA:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many South Carolina parents.

- Every day, about 185,300 children younger than six are in child care in South Carolina if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in South Carolina work to help support their families. An estimated 67 percent of South Carolina mothers with children younger than six, and 78 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in South Carolina and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in South Carolina.

> *"I was paying over half my check to the child care center and had only $10 to $15 left over at the end of the week for groceries, diapers, etc. I could not afford to do this so I left my job and applied for public assistance."*
>
> *Vida N., a South Carolina mother of three.*[6]

Child care is costly for many families in South Carolina.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in South Carolina in 1997 was $3,206[7]—less than the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center, and about three-fourths the average cost of care for an infant.
- Many families in South Carolina earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in South Carolina with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 392,610 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty or about $27,000 for a family of three).[8]

401

- In South Carolina, child care for a four-year-old in a child care center cost an average of $3,744 in 1997. Child care is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. The average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Columbia was $3,380, with fees as high as $5,516; and the average cost in Williamsburg County was $2,578, with fees as high as $2,860.[9] These expenses are for only one child. Parents with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in South Carolina[10]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Columbia		Williamsburg County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,160	$6,186	$3,900	$6,186	$3,043	$3,900
4 years	$3,744	$5,516	$3,380	$5,516	$2,578	$2,860
8 years[11]	$2,995	$3,594	$2,396	$3,594	$2,276	$2,995

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Columbia		Williamsburg County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,640	$5,460	$3,521	$5,460	$3,043	$3,900
4 years	$3,432	$5,980	$3,428	$5,980	$2,578	$2,860
8 years	$2,396	$3,594	$2,396	$3,594	$2,276	$2,995

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average cost in South Carolina, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *37 percent* of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in South Carolina are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- South Carolina ranks in the bottom three states in making low-income families eligible for child care assistance. As of January 1998, 47 states allowed families with higher incomes to receive state subsidies. Only those low-income working families earning less than $16,700* (for a family of three) are eligible for any child care help in South Carolina, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up $31,450. All other states in the country except West Virginia have higher cutoffs.[12] *[Families in South Carolina already receiving assistance can continue doing so until their annual income reaches $23,328.]
- Even with its low income cutoffs, South Carolina does not have enough funds to provide child care help to all eligible low-income working families who might apply. In a recent survey, the state reported that it is not confident that all eligible families know they can get child care assistance, or that it could serve all eligible families if they did know they could get child care help.[13]
- In South Carolina, the number of children of welfare recipients getting child care funds doubled in two years, reaching 9,300 in September 1997.[14] In a recent survey, the state indicated that, without additional funds, it cannot meet the demand for child care assistance generated by the increase in welfare work requirements. The state also reported that low-income working families who are *not* on welfare will end up losing assistance as more families on welfare need help.[15]

- South Carolina does not invest enough in helping families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 45 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, South Carolina spent 67 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[16]

Low-income parents cannot get the child care help they need to afford quality care...

South Carolina has stopped taking applications for child care assistance from low-income working families not on welfare. The money has been shifted to people working their way off of welfare. "What the state has done is a disservice to people who may not be on welfare and are trying to stay off it," said Frieda Mitchell, who runs a child care program in Beaufort. "You have some people who are taking care of kids who sometimes don't have the kids' best interests at heart. And sometimes that's all the parents can do. They don't have any choice..."

....and are left with few options when searching for child care

One parent affected by the state's decision to stop helping low-income working families was Tameka Green, homeless mother of three children, ages fourteen months, three, and four. As described in an article in The State, Green, age 22, had no money to pay for child care on her own and was unable to receive assistance from the state. To keep working and going to classes, though, she had to find child care help wherever she could. On one particular morning, after being told by two friends from the homeless shelter that they could not look after her children, she took the children to a small rental house. A woman and a shirtless man looked out, surprised but smiling. After speaking with them for a few moments, the woman agreed to care for Tameka's children. She slipped out without good-byes, hoping to avoid tears. But as she looked back over the chain link fence, one of the children's sad face was in the window. It bothered Green that for the next thirteen hours, her children would stay with a couple she met just a few months earlier at the shelter. "I don't really trust people, especially because my son is a baby," she said. "You never know what's going on when you are not around." The child care arrangement ultimately fell through and Green, who had no one to care for her children while she worked, had to quit her job.[17]

Even those South Carolina parents fortunate enough to receive child care assistance face limited options due to inadequate state policies.

- Families in South Carolina who receive child care assistance still face enormous difficulties finding providers who will take care of their children, as the amount the state will pay for care is below market prices. As of January 1998, the amount that South Carolina paid for child care was based on the cost of care in *1995*. As a consequence, providers either have to ask parents to make up the difference between the amount the state pays and the amount the provider charges (in addition to the parent fees required by the state), or refuse to take care of children receiving help from the state. In contrast, nearby states such as Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, and Virginia paid at levels that would allow families receiving child care subsidies a broader range of choices than in South Carolina.[18]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in South Carolina are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in South Carolina affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[19] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[20] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[21]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in South Carolina.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of South Carolina's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, South Carolina—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect South Carolina's children from harm.
- South Carolina is one of many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, for example, South Carolina did not meet recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for *any* of the six age groups examined.[22] For example, a caregiver in a center can care for as many as 13 three-year-olds or 18 four-year-olds alone (although early childhood experts recommend no more than seven to 10). These are among the highest ratios in the country. Caring for so many children makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.
- The state estimates that there are 5,000 to 7,000 "underground," unregulated child care homes in South Carolina. Many low-income families who cannot afford licensed care use these homes because they are inexpensive. Yet such homes can operate without meeting any health and safety protections, even such basic protections as criminal background checks for the provider, or ensuring that electrical outlets are covered and poisonous substances are locked away.[23]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[24] South Carolina is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[25] It is also one of 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior training.[26]
- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or

even bartenders ($14,450).[27] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in South Carolina was only $11,480 (only slightly above minimum wage).[28] Furthermore, national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[29]

- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in South Carolina. More than one in four (28 percent) of family child care providers go out of business in South Carolina each year, with numbers ranging up to almost half (46 percent) of the family child care providers going out of business in the Columbia area.[30] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[31]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in South Carolina.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in South Carolina. As of December 1997, only 60 of South Carolina's 1,682 licensed child care centers (or 4 percent) were accredited. Accredited centers were scarce across the state; only 16 of Columbia's 258 centers were accredited and none of the 21 centers in Williamsburg had achieved accreditation.[32] About half of the licensed centers in the state do meet South Carolina's ABC Child Care Standards, which are higher than the basic licensing requirements, but which still fall short in some key areas.

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across South Carolina face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

Many families in South Carolina have trouble finding good child care in their communities.

- Interfaith Community Services of South Carolina (a child care resource and referral agency that helps families find care) reports shortages of infant and school-age care in several areas throughout the state, and general shortages of centers and family home providers in rural areas such as the counties of Abbeville, Allendale, Edgefield, Lee, and McCormick.[33]

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many South Carolina school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many South Carolina families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 147,154 school-age children (ages five to 17) in South Carolina live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[34]
- South Carolina children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[35] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[36] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[37] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble

However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[37] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.

- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In South Carolina, only about one in four public schools (1,081 or 28 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[38]
- Families statewide who prefer a home-based setting for their school-age children have difficulty finding care, as there is a limited supply of family child care providers offering school-age care in South Carolina.[39]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in South Carolina.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[40] This means as many as 22,100 babies in South Carolina are in child care if national patterns hold true.[41]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care South Carolina's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping babies and toddlers grow, South Carolina allows a single caregiver to care for six 18-month-old toddlers. In contrast, early childhood experts recommend that a single adult care for no more than three to five toddlers.[42] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, diaper, play, and care for six active 18-month-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency.
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in South Carolina to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in South Carolina in 1997 averaged $4,160, but could cost as much as $6,186.[43]

Quality infant care is in short supply

Pat Dugger, the director of Fort Mill, South Carolina's Appleseed Child Development Center, said women are now seeking spots for their babies months before the child is even born. "Some walk in from the doctor's office," she said. "One girl hadn't even told her husband yet." Debbie Holcomb, director of the Fort Mill's First Baptist Church early education center, said her facility cares for 36 infants and has another 30 on a waiting list. "Day cares are taking fewer infants," Holcomb added. Her center, for example, could legally take 45 infants, but she wants to keep her staff-to-child ratio low to maintain quality.[44]

- Parents seeking infant care often have great difficulty finding it. According to the Interfaith Community Services of South Carolina, there are long waiting lists at those center-based programs in downtown Columbia and Charleston that offer infant care. Infant care openings are also limited in family child care homes in Irmo, Lexington and Charleston,[45] and there are severe shortages of infant care in York, Lancaster and Chester Counties.[46]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in South Carolina

Number of children younger than one[47]	49,002
Number of children younger than six[48]	308,884
Number of children ages six to 17[49]	628,881
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[50]	22,100
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[51]	185,300
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[52]	67%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[53]	78%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in South Carolina

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty) [54]	392,610
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in South Carolina[55]	$3,206

Annual Child Care Costs in South Carolina[56]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Columbia		Williamsburg County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,160	$6,186	$3,900	$6,186	$3,043	$3,900
4 years	$3,744	$5,516	$3,380	$5,516	$2,578	$2,860
8 years[57]	$2,995	$3,594	$2,396	$3,594	$2,276	$2,995

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Columbia		Williamsburg County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,640	$5,460	$3,521	$5,460	$3,043	$3,900
4 years	$3,432	$5,980	$3,428	$5,980	$2,578	$2,860
8 years	$2,396	$3,594	$2,396	$3,594	$2,276	$2,995

Many Children in South Carolina Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does South Carolina require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children? [58]	No
Does South Carolina require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children? [59]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in South Carolina in 1996[60]	$11,480
Annual turnover rate for family child care providers in South Carolina[61]	28%
Percentage of child care centers in South Carolina that were accredited as of 1997[62]	4%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in South Carolina[63]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[64]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	6	3-4	No
18 months	6	3-5	No
27 months	10	4-6	No
3 years	13	7-10	No
4 years	18	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in South Carolina

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[65]	1,682
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[66]	374
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[67]	2,160
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[68]	28%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, *Book of Families* (Washington, DC: NACCRRA, February 1998).

[7] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[8] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[9] Information from Interfaith Community Services of South Carolina, Columbia, SC; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[10] Information from Interfaith Community Services of South Carolina, Columbia, SC; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[11] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 nonschool weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Taylor, "Not Poor Enough," Columbia, SC: The State, October 26, 1997, p. A10.

[15] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[16] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[17] Taylor, "Not Poor Enough," Columbia, SC: *The State*, October 26, 1997, p. A10.

[18] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[19] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[20] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[21] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[22] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[23] Taylor, "Not Poor Enough," Columbia, SC: *The State*, October 26, 1997, p. A10.

[24] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools. (October 16, 1997).

[25] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[26] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[27] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[28] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[29] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[30] Information from Interfaith Community Services of South Carolina, Columbia, SC; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[31] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[32] Information from Interfaith Community Services of South Carolina, Columbia, SC; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[33] Information from Interfaith Community Services of South Carolina, Columbia, SC; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[34] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[35] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[36] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[37] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[38] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[39] Information from Interfaith Community Services of South Carolina, Columbia, SC; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[40] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[41] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[42] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[43] Information from Interfaith Community Services of South Carolina, Columbia, SC; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[44] Ammenhauser, "Area's growth puts squeeze on infant day care," Rock Hill, SC: *The Herald*, February 8, 1998, p. 1A.

[45] Information from Interfaith Community Services of South Carolina, Columbia, SC; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[46] Ammenhauser, "Area's growth puts squeeze on infant day care," Rock Hill, SC: *The Herald*, February 8, 1998, p. 1A.

[47] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[48] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[49] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[50] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[51] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[52] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[53] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[54] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[55] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[56] Information from Interfaith Community Services of South Carolina, Columbia, SC; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[57] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 nonschool weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[58] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[59] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[60] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[61] Information from Interfaith Community Services of South Carolina, Columbia, SC; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[62] Data from Interfaith Community Services of South Carolina, Columbia, SC; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[63] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[64] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[65] Data from Interfaith Community Services of South Carolina, Columbia, SC; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[66] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.
[67] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.
[68] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

TENNESSEE:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Tennessee parents.

- Every day, about 264,000 children younger than six are in child care in Tennessee if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Tennessee work to help support their families. An estimated 63 percent of Tennessee mothers with children younger than six, and 75 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Tennessee and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]
- Local experts estimate that there are about 45,000 three- and four-year-old children in Tennessee who are at risk to fail in school due to a variety of factors, such as poverty, disability, or other family circumstances. While about 33,000 of these children participate in some type of early childhood program, many do not receive the comprehensive, family-focused services they need to get a strong start. In addition, many of the programs are only offered on a part-day, part-year basis and are not accessible to low-income working families who need full-time child care. There are an estimated 12,000 Tennessee children who do not have access to *any* early childhood programs to help them succeed in school.[6]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Tennessee.

Child care is costly for many families in Tennessee.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Tennessee in 1997 was $2,051[7]—three-fifths the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Knoxville.
- Many families in Tennessee earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Tennessee with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 482,310 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[8]

- In Tennessee, average child care costs for a preschooler or an infant can easily equal $3,000 to $4,000 per year. The average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Knoxville in 1997, for example, was $3,446, with fees as high as $11,700.[9] These expenses are for only one child—families with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Knoxville, Tennessee (1997)[10]

	Child Care Centers		Family Child Care Homes	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,633	$11,700	$3,428	$7,020
4 years	$3,446	$11,700	$3,345	$5,200
8 years[11]	$3,311	n.a.	$3,636	$5,819

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in Knoxville, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *33 percent* of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in Tennessee are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Tennessee allows only low-income working families earning less than $25,332 (for a family of three) to be eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $31,639.[12] Tennessee's income cutoff is lower than that in a number of other states, including neighboring North Carolina.
- Even with its low income cutoffs, Tennessee does not have enough funds to serve all eligible families who apply for help paying for child care and many of these families must be placed on waiting lists.[13] Research has shown that parents waiting for child care assistance are likely to face serious financial difficulties, have difficulty staying employed, go on welfare, and/or to have serious concerns about the quality of their children's care because they cannot afford high quality child care.[14]
- The situation is likely to get worse in coming years, as more families are required to move from welfare to work. In a recent survey, Tennessee reported that, without additional funds, it is not confident that it will be able to meet the demand for child care assistance generated by the increase in welfare work requirements.[15] Low-income working families who are *not* on welfare may end up losing assistance as more families on welfare need help.
- Tennessee does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 26 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Tennessee spent 115 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[16]

Even those Tennessee families fortunate enough to receive child care assistance still face limited options and financial hardship due to inadequate state policies.

- Families in Tennessee who receive child care assistance still face significant difficulties in obtaining care for their children, as the amount the state will pay for care is below market prices.[17] For example, the state spends a maximum of $72 for an infant in a child-care center in a large city, although—according to the Department of Human Services—the true cost of infant care can be more than *twice* that amount, from $150 to $200 per week.[18] As a consequence, providers, who are often themselves financially strapped, have few choices. Either they must refuse to take care of children who receive child care assistance, or they must ask low-income parents to pay the difference between the low state rates and the rate the provider charges, an expense that the parents' very eligibility for child care subsidies indicates they cannot afford.[19]

- As of January 1998, a number of nearby states (such as Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, and Virginia) paid at levels that reflected more current market prices, and thus allowed families receiving child care subsidies a broader range of choices than in Tennessee.

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Tennessee are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Tennessee affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[20] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[21] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[22]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Tennessee.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Tennessee's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Tennessee—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Tennessee's children from harm.
- Tennessee is one of the many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, Tennessee met recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for only *one* of the six age groups examined.[23] For example, the state allowed a caregiver in a center to care for as many as 15 four-year-olds alone, although early childhood experts recommend no more than seven to 10. This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.
- Tennessee allows individuals caring for fewer than five children in their homes to operate without having to meet any licensing health and safety protections. This means that a provider with a history of child abuse could legally care for as many as four children in his/her home, and that a program could legally operate with safety hazards such as uncovered electrical outlets or poisonous substances that are not locked away.[24]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[25] Tennessee is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[26] It is also one of 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior training.[27]
- Currently, the only requirements an individual must fulfill to run a child care center (centers care for 13 or more children) in Tennessee are to have a high school diploma and at least two years of experience with children. Main teachers in child care center classrooms are only required to be at least eighteen and to have a high school diploma.[28]
- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[29] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Tennessee was only $11,140 (only slightly above minimum wage).[30] Furthermore, national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[31]
- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers; nationwide, about one-third of child care teachers leave their centers each year.[32] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[33]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Tennessee.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in Tennessee. In 1997, only about 95 of Tennessee's 2,741 licensed child care centers (or 3 percent) were accredited.[34] Even in an urban area such as Knoxville, accredited programs are hard to find. As of spring 1998, only six of the city's 218 licensed operating child care centers were accredited.[35]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Tennessee face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Tennessee school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Tennessee families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 214,580 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Tennessee live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[36]
- Tennessee children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[37] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[38] However,

studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[39] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.

- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Tennessee, only one in five public schools (1,522 or 21 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[40]
- The situation in Memphis demonstrates how difficult it is to find good options for school-age children and young teenagers. Most child care centers in Memphis that offer after-school care cut off their programs at age 12. While the YWCA operates one after-school program in a middle school, and the Memphis Park Commission runs programs in 10 middle schools, after-school care is not available at a majority of public schools.[41]
- Parents in Knoxville are unable to find school-age programs that provide transportation from their child's school, according to the Knoxville Child Care Information and Referral Service.[42] As a result, parents must worry every day whether their children will have somewhere to go after school and, if so, whether they will get there safely.

School-age options are limited

Jackie Tompkins, a mother in Shelby County, is alarmed that there is no regular after-school program at Houston Middle School in Germantown, where her 10-year-old daughter is scheduled to enter next year as a sixth-grader. After checking a variety of places, Tompkins has not found anywhere for her daughter to go after school other than an empty house. "She'll be eleven. That's still a vulnerable age. I don't think it's good for a child to be idle for three or four hours without any adult supervision," she said. The Tompkins feel strongly enough about this issue that they are planning to incur the significant financial burden of sending their daughter to a private school that has an after-school program.[43]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Tennessee.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[44] This means as many as 32,100 babies in Tennessee are in child care if national patterns hold true.[45]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Tennessee's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, while a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping very young children grow, Tennessee allows a single caregiver to care for seven 18-month-old toddlers. In contrast, early childhood experts recommend no more than three to five toddlers

this age per adult.[46] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, diaper, play, and care for seven active 18-month-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency such as a fire.

Tennessee parents worry about the quality of care for infants

Fran, a 30-year-old mother from Franklin, writes about her concerns with the quality of care for very young children: "I would...like to have the caregiver-child ratios changed. I know they vary from state to state. They seem very inadequate in the state of Tennessee. I believe that one person cannot fulfill the needs of five infants or even four. This high ratio has to be bad for our children."[47]

- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Tennessee to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. For example, child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Knoxville in 1997 averaged $3,633, but could cost as much as $11,700.[48]

Other families in Tennessee face shortages of care as well—such as families where the children have special needs or where the parents work nontraditional hours.

- Many parents with special circumstances have problems trying to find child care. For example, families who have children with special needs find it difficult to locate child care providers who are willing to care for their children. Families who work nontraditional hours, such as evenings or weekends, face challenges as well. According to the Knoxville Child Care Information and Referral Service, many Knoxville parents needing these types of care have limited, if any, options.[49]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Tennessee

Number of children younger than one[50]	71,237
Number of children younger than six[51]	440,022
Number of children ages six to 17[52]	882,139
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[53]	32,100
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[54]	264,000
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[55]	63%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[56]	75%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Tennessee

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[57]	482,310
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Tennessee[58]	$2,051

Annual Child Care Costs in Knoxville, Tennessee (1997)[59]

	Child Care Centers		Family Child Care Homes	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,633	$11,700	$3,428	$7,020
4 years	$3,446	$11,700	$3,345	$5,200
8 years[60]	$3,311	n.a.	$3,636	$5,819

Many Children in Tennessee Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Tennessee require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[61]	No
Does Tennessee require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[62]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in Tennessee in 1996[63]	$11,140
Percentage of child care centers in Tennessee that were accredited as of 1997[64]	3%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Tennessee[65]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[66]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	5	3-4	No
18 months	7	3-5	No
27 months	8	4-6	No
3 years	10	7-10	Yes
4 years	15	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in Tennessee

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[67]	2,741
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[68]	646
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[69]	1,872
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[70]	21%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Tennessee General Assembly, The Select Committee on Children and Youth, *Building a Legacy for Children and Families, a Report from 1987 to 1996* (Tennessee: 99th General Assembly, State of Tennessee, January 1997), p. 33.

[7] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[8] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[9] Information from Knoxville Child Care Information and Referral Service, Knoxville, TN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[10] Information from Knoxville Child Care Information and Referral Service, Knoxville, TN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[11] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, *Valuing Families: The High Cost of Waiting for Child Care Sliding Fee Assistance* (Minneapolis, MN: 1995); and Phillips, *Child Care for Low-Income Families: A Summary of Two Workshops* (Washington, DC: Board on Children and Families, National Research Council, 1995).

[15] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[16] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[17] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[18] De La Cruz, "State raises the standards for child care," Nashville TN: *The Tennessean*, January 16, 1998, p. 1A.

[19] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[20] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[21] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[22] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[23] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[24] Information from Knoxville Child Care Information and Referral Service, Knoxville, TN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[25] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools. (October 16, 1997).

[26] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[27] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[28] LaPolt, "Tougher rules for day care workers sought," Nashville, TN: *The Nashville Banner*, January 5, 1998, p A1.

[29] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[30] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[31] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[32] National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW).

[33] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[34] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[35] Information from Knoxville Child Care Information and Referral Service, Knoxville, TN, April 27, 1998.

[36] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[37] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[38] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[39] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[40] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[41] White, "After School For Middle Schoolers....," Memphis, TN: *The Commercial Appeal*, February 3, 1998, p C1.

[42] Information from Knoxville Child Care Information and Referral Service, Knoxville, TN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[43] White, "After School For Middle Schoolers....," Memphis, TN: *The Commercial Appeal*, February 3, 1998, p C1.

[44] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[45] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[46] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[47] From Lifetime Television's online project "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment" which collects stories about child care from families around the country. It is found at www.lifetimetv.com.

[48] Information from Knoxville Child Care Information and Referral Service, Knoxville, TN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[49] Information from Knoxville Child Care Information and Referral Service, Knoxville, TN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[50] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[51] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[52] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[53] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[54] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[55] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[56] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[57] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[58] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[59] Information from Knoxville Child Care Information and Referral Service, Knoxville, TN; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[60] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[61] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing.* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[62] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing.* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[63] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[64] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs:

Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[65] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[66] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[67] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[68] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[69] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[70] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

TEXAS:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Texas parents.

- Every day, about 1,140,000 children younger than six are in child care in Texas if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Texas work to help support their families. An estimated 58 percent of Texas mothers with children younger than six, and 72 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Texas and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Texas.

Child care is costly for many families in Texas.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. For example, the average annual cost of public college tuition in Texas in 1997 was $2,022[6]—about three-fifths the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center.
- Many families in Texas earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Texas with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 2,039,600 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[7]
- In Texas, child care for one four-year-old in a child care center cost an average of $3,335 in 1994, with fees as high as $6,240. Today, child care costs even more in some parts of the state. For example, the average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Dallas in 1998 is $3,789, with fees as high as $8,279.[8] These expenses are for only one child—families with more than one child in care spend significantly more.
- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in Texas, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *33 percent* of their income for child care.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Texas[9]

Child Care Centers

	Statewide (1994)		Dallas (1998)	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,647	$7,280	$4,838	$9,620
4 years	$3,335	$6,240	$3,789	$8,279
8 years[10]	$2,869	n.a.	$3,822	$8,386

Family Child Care Homes

	Statewide		Dallas (1998)	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	n.a.	n.a.	$3,877	$7,800
4 years	n.a.	n.a.	$3,375	$6,500
8 years	n.a.	n.a.	$2,959	$5,990

Parents cannot find quality care within their price range, which makes it difficult for them to work and support their children

Karen is a single parent living in Arlington with her three-year-old son Jacob. Her job at an insurance company pays just enough to support her and her small son. Budgeting very carefully, Karen has set aside $240 each month for child care. As all parents, she wants the best possible care for her son and hopes that he can spend his days while she is at work in a caring, safe, and stimulating environment. After visiting 12 different child care programs within her budget, including child care centers and registered family homes, Karen has become very discouraged. None of these programs has met her expectations. Her choices have narrowed to placing Jacob in a program where she will be concerned about his well-being, or giving up her self-sufficiency and quitting her job to stay home with him.[11]

* * * * * * * * * * *

Sue is a 39-year-old mother living in the Woodlands. She writes: "We were a two income family (and need to be), both in retail management. Due to the cost of child care I have been unable to go back to the work force. This has put a huge burden on my family and our financial security is no longer secure. I have sold the stock I had put away for retirement in order to stay home as long as I can. Time is running out, and I am unable to find a job that will pay for the high cost of child care as well as the cost of going back to work. I have been shocked at most of the child care centers that I have visited.... the infant/teacher ratio is high, and the teachers are paid such low wages the turnover is high. I don't pretend to have the answers, but I know we need solutions and we need them fast.... Our children are blank canvases, we need to fill them with love and show them right from wrong. What we do now will impact them for the rest of all our lives, they are our future...."[12]

Many low-income working families in Texas are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- The state ranks in the bottom third of all states in making low-income families eligible for child care assistance—as of January 1998, only those working families with incomes below $20,000* (for a family of three) are eligible for any child care help in Texas, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $31,400.[13] *[For a teen parent or a family already receiving assistance, the eligibility limit is extended to $27,484 per year.]
- The income cutoff for child care assistance in Texas is lower than that of 36 other states, including several nearby states. While a family earning $24,000 could not qualify for help in Texas, a family earning this much would be eligible in Georgia, Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Louisiana.[14]
- Texas does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 71 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Texas spent 43 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[15]
- Even counting local government and charitable funding, only a fraction of the need for child care assistance is being addressed. For example, in Austin, the combined funds from the federal, state, and local governments, and funds from local charities (such as the United Way) are estimated to meet only 10 to 25 percent of the need for child care assistance.[16]

Families eligible for child care assistance in Texas face long waiting lists.

- Even with the state's low income cutoffs, about 30,000 families in Texas were on the waiting list for child care assistance as of January 1998.[17] In Dallas County alone, there are nearly 3,000 children on the waiting list, with some parents having spent more than five years waiting for help with their child care expenses.[18] Research has shown that parents waiting for child care assistance are likely to face serious financial difficulties, have difficulty staying employed, go on welfare, and/or to have serious concerns about the quality of their children's care because they cannot afford good quality care.[19]
- Texas' waiting list actually *underestimates* the unmet need for child care assistance, since the state reports that many eligible families believe it is futile to even apply for help with such long waiting lists. The state estimates that it is currently serving only about 4 to 5 percent of all eligible families,[20] and expects to be able to serve a still smaller percentage of eligible families in the coming years.[21]
- The situation is likely to get worse as more families are required to move from welfare to work. In a recent survey, Texas reported that, without additional funds, it is not confident that it will be able to meet the demand for child care assistance generated by the increase in welfare work requirements. The state welfare reform waiver currently exempts families with a child younger than four from work; once this waiver runs out and the state becomes subject to federal rules, Texas may have problems serving not only low-income working families but families on welfare as well.[22]

While child care assistance can help low-income working families get on their feet....

Texan Melinda M. had been married and a "stay-at-home mom" when her husband left her and she found herself suddenly in financial difficulty. Melinda applied for welfare, and received child care assistance while she participated in her work training program. She graduated from an arts/graphics school in May, and two days before graduation she was offered a job as a software developer for an Irving-based company. She is eligible to get partial child care assistance during her transitional year, while she gets settled in her new job and back on her feet.[23]

....too many Texas parents cannot get the child care help they need

Carmen is facing a crisis. Although she is eligible for Texas' child care assistance program, she is on a long waiting list with little hope of getting financial assistance within a year. A single mother of two sons, Carmen needs full-time care near her Allen home while she works a rotating shift at a publishing company. Her older son is starting the first grade and needs transportation between child care and school. Her four-year-old son needs full-time care. Carmen earns just over minimum wage and can spare less than $100 each month for care. The average cost of full-time care is nearly $80 a week for one child.[24]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Texas are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Texas affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[25] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[26] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[27]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Texas.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Texas' children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Texas—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Texas' children from harm.
- Texas is one of the many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, for example, the state met recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for only two of the six age groups examined.[28] The state allowed a caregiver in a center to care for as many as 17 three-year-olds or 20 four-year-olds

alone, although early childhood experts recommend no more than seven to 10. Texas allows more children per adult than most other states, making it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need to be safe and thrive.

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[29] Texas is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[30]

Texas parents worry about the lack of training for child care providers

Darlene, a 29-year-old mother from Amarillo, describes her concerns about child care. While the particular problem she describes—being hired as a teacher in a child care center with no training—is no longer possible in Texas because teachers in centers now must have eight hours of early childhood training prior to starting work, the same situation could occur today in Texas with family child care providers, who are not required to have any training in early childhood prior to caring for children in their homes.

"I am one of the fortunate ones who is able to stay home and raise my daughter. My husband earns enough to provide the income we need on his own. However, not many families these days can say that. Our children are the future and we must do all we can to provide them with a safe happy environment. One of my concerns about child care is the lack of training for child care workers as well as background checks. Several years ago, I worked (temporarily) for a child care facility. I was hired almost on the spot without much of an interview. All I needed was a TB test and I was in. I had never taken care of children and I was not a parent at the time. I felt that I was thrown into a situation that I was clearly not capable of handling. I was not offered any training. There were several children to one child care worker and because of that, there was no one-on-one.... It's a shame that hard working parents can't go to work and earn a living without having to worry about who is watching their children.. And, it's more of a shame that we must write these kinds of letters...begging for help for the welfare of our children; isn't it obvious?"[31]

- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[32] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Texas was only $12,020 (not far above minimum wage).[33] Furthermore, national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[34]

- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in Texas. For instance, in Austin, where the economy is strong, many educated, experienced child care workers are leaving the field in search of jobs with better pay and higher status.[35] Nationwide, about one-third of child care teachers leave their centers each year[36]—in contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers are only 6.6 percent.[37]

Child care providers' wages are too low

Many child care teachers in Texas are leaving the low-paying child care field for better-paying jobs, making it difficult for child care centers to attract and keep staff. Childtime Learning Centers, a national chain with several centers in Texas, has had difficulty finding child care teachers. Similarly, Substitutes R' Us, a Dallas child care staffing firm, reports that they are "bombarded with calls for both temporary and permanent replacements." Even the laboratory child care center at Eastfield College in Mesquite, where many teachers train and make better-than-average pay, is struggling to fill four openings—for a lead teacher and three assistant teachers, according to Dr. Wyatt, head of the child-development program at the school. "A lot of people are saying, 'Why should I kill myself and endure a lot of stress when I can get the same wages at McDonald's?'," she said. One former Dallas-area child care director spoke of the impact that such high turnover rates have on children: "I've seen children mourn for their teachers...It's difficult for the children, and it's very sad."[38]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Texas.

- In a survey of over 3,700 Texas workers, 40 percent of parents responding reported that the quality of care is their biggest child care problem. Half of the parents had changed their care arrangements in the last six months preceding the survey, and over one-quarter had considered quitting their jobs because of child care problems.[39]
- In Texas, a young child and his or her parents can expect to have *five* different caregivers by the child's third birthday, not including inevitable staff turnover.[40] Yet, a close and stable relationship with a nurturing provider is one of the cornerstones for healthy child development.
- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in Texas. In 1997, only about 385 of Texas' 7,445 licensed child care centers (or 5 percent) were accredited,[41] and only 98 of the 12,192 registered family child care homes (less than 1 percent) were accredited.[42]
- A study of family and relative child care settings in Texas and two other states found that only one out of ten of the settings it examined encouraged children's growth and development. In over one out of three cases, the child care actually had potentially harmful impacts on children's development. In addition, only half of the children observed had a secure, warm relationship with their provider.[43]

A police chief discusses the importance of quality child care

The Dallas Chief of Police writes, "Texas now has more than 126,800 inmates in our prison system—more than any country in the world. It costs Texas taxpayers more than $5.5 million per day to keep them there. As policy makers, we can continue to build more prisons until we run out of money, or we can begin now to create crime and violence prevention strategies that work.... Something is wrong...very wrong. To make it right, we have to start much further upstream than previously thought. The juvenile crime problem will not be solved in the juvenile justice system alone. It will be solved in partnerships with economic development and human service committees.... Even though we know what it takes to "grow" a caring, responsible human being, far too many infants and preschoolers in our communities spend their days in environments which are hostile to their development. They are not nurtured; they are not valued, they miss out on relationships with adults that make them feel special—the relationships that lay the foundations for conscience and that stimulate their desire to learn. When young children are not cared about, they become adolescents who don't care.... With the majority of young children spending their days in some form of child care, we have to evaluate and invest in programs that promote healthy development—programs that nurture and allow children to grow physically, intellectually, and emotionally."[44]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Texas face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

Many families in Texas have trouble finding good child care in their communities.

- In 1994 in Texas, there were three children whose parents were working for every licensed child care slot in the state. Licensed care was in particularly short supply in some Texas counties—for example, in Ellis there were four or five children with working parents for every licensed slot and in Denton there were five or six children with working parents for every slot.[45]

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Texas school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Texas families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 973,003 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Texas live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[46]
- Texas children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[47] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[48] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of

problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[49] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.

- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Texas, only one in five public schools (5,890 or 21 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[50]

- The situation in Dallas provides one example of the difficulties parents face as they search for school-age care. In 1996, only one in five Dallas County school-age children (ages five to 11) with working parents had access to available slots in after-school programs, according to estimates by the Dallas Commission on Children and Youth.[51]

Parents face limited options because they cannot find transportation to school-age child care

Corey lives in a small community of homes in a newly developed area of Dallas/Ft. Worth. His son, Zach, has just started kindergarten and needs before- and after-school care. He has been enrolled in a child care center near his father's work site, but it is too far from the elementary school for Zach to be able to walk, and the center does not provide transportation. Because the community is so small, there is very little child care. Some residents use informal, unregulated child care, but Corey is concerned about using such care because in child care, "informal" often means "invisible." Corey has asked around, but nobody know anyone who can provide transportation for Zach to and from kindergarten. Although Corey moved to the small community because it is peaceful and seems safe, he does not want Zach to have to walk very far by himself.[52]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Texas.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[53] This means as many as 141,700 babies in Texas are in child care if national patterns hold true.[54]

- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Texas' young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.

- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, while a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping very young children grow, Texas allows a single caregiver to care for ten 18-month-old toddlers. Only one other state allows a provider to care for as many children this age. It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, diaper, play, and care for *ten* active 18-month-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency such as a fire. Early childhood experts recommend that a single caregiver be responsible no more than three to five toddlers this age, a recommendation followed by 25 states.[55]

- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Texas to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Texas in 1994 averaged $3,647, but could cost as much as $7,280.[56]
- In Texas, child care programs for infants and toddlers are almost always full, and waiting lists are the norm—there is simply not enough care to meet the demand.[57]

Parents cannot find quality infant care

Samantha, a Texas mother, is concerned about her baby. The caregivers at the child care center in which her child is enrolled say that all the baby does all day is lie in her crib and sleep. When Samantha brings her home each evening, she is listless and withdrawn for about an hour and gradually begins to respond to her mother. By bedtime, she becomes her usual active self again. The cycle repeats itself each work day. One day, Samantha visited the center unannounced and found chaos. She understood immediately that her baby was withdrawing from a dark, noisy room, crowded with more than 20 infants and toddlers in the care of two very young and obviously untrained women. Now Samantha is distraught. In her rural town, there are no other child care programs available. Samantha knows her daughter will not thrive at the center, but she does not have the option of quitting work to care for her child.[58]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Texas

Number of children younger than one[59]	314,820
Number of children younger than six[60]	1,899,795
Number of children ages six to 17[61]	3,552,482
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[62]	141,700
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[63]	1,139,900
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[64]	58%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[65]	72%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Texas

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[66]	2,039,640
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Texas[67]	$2,022

Annual Child Care Costs in Texas[68]

Child Care Centers

	Statewide (1994)		Dallas (1998)	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,647	$7,280	$4,838	$9,620
4 years	$3,335	$6,240	$3,789	$8,279
8 years[69]	$2,869	n.a.	$3,822	$8,386

Family Child Care Homes

	Statewide		Dallas (1998)	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	n.a.	n.a.	$3,877	$7,800
4 years	n.a.	n.a.	$3,375	$6,500
8 years	n.a.	n.a.	$2,959	$5,990

Many Children in Texas Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Texas require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children? [70]	Yes
Does Texas require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children? [71]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in Texas in 1996[72]	$12,020
Percentage of child care centers in Texas that were accredited as of 1997[73]	5%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Texas[74]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[75]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	10	3-5	No
27 months	13	4-6	No
3 years	17	7-10	No
4 years	20	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in Texas

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[76]	7,445
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[77]	1,668
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[78]	12,192
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[79]	21%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from Child Care Management Services, Dallas, TX; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[9] Information from Child Care Management Services, Dallas, TX; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[10] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[11] The Child Care Company, *A Question of Child Care: Findings in the Dallas/Ft. Worth Area* (Dallas, TX: The Child Care Company, 1994).

[12] From Lifetime Television's online project "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment" which collects stories about child care from families around the country. It is found at www.lifetimetv.com.

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[15] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[16] According to Ron Hubbard, interim coordinator for Austin/Travis County, TX's Early Childhood Services Office. Cited in "Follow Up: Child Care in Texas," *Families in Crisis Funding Report* (Silver Spring, MD: CD Publications, November 10, 1997), p. 8.

[17] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[18] Easley et al. (eds.), *Beyond ABC: Growing Up in Dallas County* (Dallas, TX: Children's Medical Center of Texas and The Coalition for North Texas Children, January 1998), p. 39.

[19] Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, *Valuing Families: The High Cost of Waiting for Child Care Sliding Fee Assistance* (Minneapolis, MN: 1995); and Phillips, *Child Care for Low-Income Families: A Summary of Two Workshops* (Washington, DC: Board on Children and Families, National Research Council, 1995).

[20] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[21] Rubin, *A Texas Child Care and Early Education Fact Finder* (Texas: The Child Care Group, 1996), p. V-3.

[22] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[23] The Child Care Company, *A Question of Child Care: Findings in the Dallas/Ft. Worth Area* (Dallas, TX: The Child Care Company, 1994).

[24] The Child Care Company, *A Question of Child Care: Findings in the Dallas/Ft. Worth Area* (Dallas, TX: The Child Care Company, 1994).

[25] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[26] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[27] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[28] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[29] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools. (October 16, 1997).

[30] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[31] From Lifetime Television's online project "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment" which collects stories about child care from families around the country. It is found at www.lifetimetv.com.

[32] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[33] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[34] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce. *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[35] Information reported by Travis County's Early Childhood Office, cited in *Families in Crisis Funding Report* (Silver Spring, MD: CD Publications, November 10, 1997), p. 8.

[36] National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW).

[37] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[38] Kessler, "Child-care centers face crisis in staffing," Dallas, TX: *The Dallas Morning News*, December 28, 1997, p. 26A.

[39] The Child Care Company, *A Question of Child Care: Findings in the Dallas/Ft. Worth Area* (Dallas, TX: The Child Care Company, 1994).

[40] Rubin, *A Texas Child Care and Early Education Fact Finder* (Texas: The Child Care Group, 1996), p. IV-3.

[41] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[42] Information from Child Care Management Services, Dallas, TX; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[43] Data from "The Study of Children in Family Child Care and Relative Care," conducted by the Families and Work Institute (April 1994), cited in Rubin, *A Texas Child Care and Early Education Fact Finder* (Texas: The Child Care Group, 1996) p. II-3.

[44] Rubin, *A Texas Child Care and Early Education Fact Finder* (Texas: The Child Care Group, 1996) p. I-4.

[45] The Child Care Company, *A Question of Child Care: Findings in the Dallas/Ft. Worth Area* (Dallas, TX: The Child Care Company, 1994).

[46] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[47] School-Age Child Care Project. "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[48] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[49] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[50] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[51] Easley et al. (eds.), *Beyond ABC: Growing Up in Dallas County* (Dallas, TX: Children's Medical Center of Texas and The Coalition for North Texas Children, January 1998), p. 45.

[52] The Child Care Company, *A Question of Child Care: Findings in the Dallas/Ft. Worth Area* (Dallas, TX: The Child Care Company, 1994).

[53] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[54] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[55] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[56] Information from Child Care Management Services, Dallas, TX; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[57] Rubin, *A Texas Child Care and Early Education Fact Finder* (Texas: The Child Care Group, 1996) p. IV- 3.

[58] The Child Care Company, *A Question of Child Care: Findings in the Dallas/Ft. Worth Area* (Dallas, TX: The Child Care Company, 1994).

[59] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[60] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[61] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[62] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[63] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[64] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[65] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[66] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995*. Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[67] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[68] Information from Child Care Management Services, Dallas, TX; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[69] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF

assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[70] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[71] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[72] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[73] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[74] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[75] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[76] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[77] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[78] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[79] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

VIRGINIA:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Virginia parents.

- Every day, about 330,100 children younger than six are in child care in Virginia if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Virginia work to help support their families. An estimated 64 percent of Virginia mothers with children younger than six, and 78 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Virginia and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

Many Virginia families experience problems with child care

The situation in Fairfax provides one example of the problems families throughout the state face in their search for quality, affordable care. According to a survey of parents, two-thirds of all households that use or need to find child care for work or school-related reasons experienced some problem with child care in the past year. This represents 32,800 Virginia households. Specifically:

- *15,400 families (29 percent) reported that they had difficulty affording child care. This number rose to almost half (44 percent) of lower-income county residents.*
- *12,700 (24 percent) had difficulty finding child care that matched the parents' school or work schedules.*
- *10,600 (20 percent) had problems with the quality of care.*

Information from the 1997 State of Human Services Report[6]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Virginia.

Child care is costly for many families in Virginia.

- Child care often costs more than a college education at a public university. For example, the average annual cost of public college tuition in Virginia in 1997 was $3,962[7]—less than the cost of care for a four-year-old in a center at the low end of the price range in Virginia Beach, and less than three-fifths the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Fairfax

- Many families in Virginia earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Virginia with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 433,320 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[8]

- In Virginia, child care for a preschooler in a center can easily cost $4,000 to $7,000 per year. Child care is expensive for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. In Virginia Beach, the annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center ranges from $4,160 to $6,760; in Norfolk, the annual cost of care for a four-year-old ranges from $2,860 to $5,460. The cost of care is even higher in Fairfax, where center care for a four-year-old costs an average of $7,020 per year, with fees as high as $8,632 per year.[9] These expenses are for only one child—families with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Virginia[10]

Child Care Centers (1998)

	Virginia Beach		Norfolk		Fairfax	
Age of child	Low	High	Low	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,680	$7,800	$4,680	$6,500	$8,892	$10,504
4 years	$4,160	$6,760	$2,860	$5,460	$7,020	$8,632
8 years	$1,820	$5,200	$3,900	$4,680	$6,240	$8,424

Family Child Care Homes (1998)

	Virginia Beach		Norfolk		Fairfax	
Age of child	Low	High	Low	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,640	$6,240	$3,380	$4,680	$7,280	$9,256
4 years	$2,600	$5,200	$2,600	$3,900	$6,708	$8,580
8 years	$1,300	$4,160	$1,300	$3,380	$5,460	$7,540

Many Virginia parents who need to work cannot afford child care

Sandra Little, a Hampton mother of two who works as an intelligence specialist at a Navy base in Norfolk says sometimes she is envious of parents who can stay home. She is a single mother now, but even before her husband died last July after surgery for a brain tumor, they struggled to pay the cost of child care for their two children, ages ten months and three years. Now that her military child care center is closing in two months, she estimates that she may need to spend as much as 50 percent of her paycheck on child care. "I've seen prices for infant care that range from $80 a week to $120," she said. "I think more attention needs to be paid to the day care issue. Nowadays, you have to have two working parents, as well as single parents like me that have no choice about whether they need to work or not."[11]

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the low end of the price range in Virginia Beach, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *41 percent* of their income for child care. To buy child care at the average price in Fairfax, this family would have to spend *74 percent* of their income.

Many low-income working families in Virginia are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Virginia ranks in the bottom half of states in making low-income families eligible for child care assistance. As of January 1998, only those low-income working families earning less than $22,668 (for a family of three) were eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $35,723. Virginia's income cutoff is lower than the eligibility cutoffs in a number of states, including nearby North Carolina and Tennessee.[12]
- Virginia allows counties to set income cutoffs at even lower levels. As a consequence, some counties set their income cutoff as low as $18,700 for a family of three—which is among the ten lowest cutoffs in the country.[13]
- Even with Virginia's low income cutoff, many hard-working families who *are* eligible are unable to get child care assistance due to inadequate funding. About 6,000 families were on the waiting list for child care assistance as of January 1998. This waiting list may underestimate the unmet need for child care, since the state reports that some families eligible for assistance may not even know they can get help.[14] Research has shown that parents waiting for child care assistance are likely to face serious financial difficulties, have difficulty staying employed, go on welfare, and/or have serious concerns about the quality of their children's care because they cannot afford to buy good quality care.[15]
- The situation is likely to get worse in coming years, as more families are required to move from welfare to work. In a recent survey, Virginia reported that, without additional funds, it is not confident that it will be able to meet the demand for child care assistance generated by the increase in welfare work requirements.[16] Low-income working families who are *not* on welfare may end up losing assistance as more families on welfare need help.
- Virginia does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 24 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Virginia spent 121 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[17]

Virginia families fortunate enough to receive child care assistance still face financial hardship due to inadequate state policies.

- Families receiving child care assistance in Virginia continue to shoulder a huge financial burden, as the state's family copayment levels for very low-income families are among the highest in the country. The state requires *all* families receiving child care assistance to pay 10 percent of their income—regardless of how little they earn—toward the cost of care.[18] Experts agree that families living in poverty (which means they have a gross income of less than $1100 a month for a family of three) cannot afford such high copayments as they struggle with expenses for other necessities such as food, rent, and health care.

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Virginia are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Virginia affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[19] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[20] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[21]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Virginia.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Virginia's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Virginia—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Virginia's children from harm.

- Virginia is one of the many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, for example, the state allowed a caregiver in a center to care for as many as 12 four-year-olds alone, although early childhood experts recommend no more than eight to 10. This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.[22]

- Periodic inspections by licensing staff are one of the most important ways to ensure the safety and well-being of children in licensed child care programs, as the inspections allow licensers to detect unsafe situations such as safety risks, unsanitary practices, and too many children per adult to supervise adequately. Yet, according to a report by the Virginia Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC), the state licensing office is not adequately staffed to complete the inspections of day care facilities required by state law. The JLARC reports that failing to complete the legally required inspection visits has the potential to place the health and safety of children at risk. It recommends that the department hire sufficient staff to ensure that it can at least conduct the two inspections required by law, as well as more frequent visits when warranted.[23]

- The JLARC report found that in FY 1996:
    - ⇒ The state licensing agency failed to complete the required two inspections for 722 facilities (out of a total of 4,223).
    - ⇒ The state failed to conduct routine inspections for 159 facilities, and in some instances the facilities had not been visited for two years.
    - ⇒ Most of the neglected facilities were in Northern Virginia and Tidewater.

- Virginia allows individuals caring for fewer than six children in their homes to operate without having to get a license. This means that a provider with a history of child abuse could legally care for as many as five children in his/her home, and that a program could legally operate with safety hazards such as uncovered electrical outlets or poisonous substances that are not locked away.[24]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[25] Virginia is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[26] It is also one of 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior training.[27]
- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[28] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Virginia was only $12,860.[29] Furthermore, national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[30]
- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in Virginia. For example, in Fairfax County, more than one out of three (35 percent) family child care providers go out of business each year.[31] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[32]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Virginia.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in Virginia. In 1997, only about 188 of Virginia's child care centers were accredited.[33] Accredited centers are difficult to find throughout the state. For instance, in Fairfax County, only 50 child care centers were accredited.[34] Prince William County had a particularly limited supply of accredited centers, with just three accredited facilities.[35]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Virginia face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Virginia school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Virginia families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 180,327 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Virginia live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[36]
- Virginia children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[37] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[38] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[39] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.

- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Virginia, only one in four public schools (1,698 or 23 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[40]

- In South Hampton Roads, Virginia, the availability of before- and after-school care offered in public schools varies widely. On the one end of the spectrum, the Parks and Recreation Department in Virginia Beach offers before- and after-school care in all of the school district's 53 elementary schools and in five of the 14 middle schools. At the other end of the spectrum is Chesapeake, where the Parks and Recreation Department offers free recreation activities in only *four* of the district's 27 elementary schools and no before-school care in any of the schools. Yet, a 1994 survey indicated that many Chesapeake parents would use before- and after-school care if it were available. Two-thirds of the parents responding said they would use such care if they had access to it.[41]

- Fairfax's child care resource and referral agency (CCR&R), which helps families find care, reports that many families with school-age children have difficulty finding child care for their children.[42] The Norfolk Planning Council also indicates that the supply of school-age care is inadequate, as is transportation to and from before- and after-school programs.[43]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Virginia.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[44] This means as many as 39,900 babies in Virginia are in child care if national patterns hold true.[45]

- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Virginia's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.

- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping very young children grow, Virginia allows a single caregiver in a child care center to care for as many as 10 two-year-olds (age 27 months) alone.[46] In contrast, early childhood experts recommend that there be no more than six two-year-olds per adult. It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, play, and care for eight active two-year-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency such as a fire.

- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Virginia to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Virginia Beach ranges from $4,680 to $7,800 per year. In Fairfax, infant care in a center averages $8,892 per year, but can cost as much as $10,502 per year.[47]

- There are shortages of infant care in Virginia. For example, the Office for Children in Fairfax reports that there are shortages of infant care in Fairfax County. In addition, it reports that existing child care programs taking care of babies often face challenges, such as the lack of funding for equipment, that make it difficult for the programs to stay in business.[48] Shortages of infant care are also reported by the Norfolk Planning Council.[49]

Other families in Virginia face shortages of care as well—such as families where the children have special needs or where the parents work nontraditional schedules.

- Resource and referral staff at the Office of Children in Fairfax County report that families throughout the area have difficulty finding care for children with special needs.[50]
- Families across the state who work nontraditional hours, such as evening or weekend shifts, are having trouble finding care. For example, according to the Norfolk Planning Council, the region lacks adequate resources to meet the child care needs of parents working nontraditional hours.[51] In addition, a study of families in Fairfax County found that a quarter had difficulty finding care that matched their work or school schedules.[52]

The lack of care during nontraditional hours in Virginia jeopardizes the ability of families to move from welfare to work

The Council of Community Services recently studied the child care needs of women in Roanoke Valley who are moving from welfare to work. The study found gaps in the supply of child care during second and third shifts, which many parents leaving welfare have no choice but to work. As a result, either children are left home alone or in substandard care, or families are not be able to get and keep jobs.

For example, during last year's busy Christmas shopping season, Shantell Martin, 27, found a sales job at a Roanoke department store. Her hours were erratic and included weekdays and weekends—some days she would work 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., others noon to 10 p.m. Martin—who relies on welfare to support her three sons—needed reliable, flexible child care. She received several family child care home referrals from the Roanoke Department of Social Services. "I had one lady who did two or three nights, then she never showed up again," said Martin. "The second one couldn't pick my kids up from school and she didn't work the hours I worked. It was hard for either one to do weekends." Martin eventually had to quit her job. She is looking for another. "They should have more people baby-sitting for the hours that people can get jobs," she said. "They should have day care for any job that you get."[53]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Virginia

Number of children younger than one[54]	88,575
Number of children younger than six[55]	550,218
Number of children ages six to 17[56]	1,081,618
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[57]	39,900
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[58]	330,100
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[59]	64%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[60]	78%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Virginia

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[61]	433,320
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Virginia[62]	$3,962

Annual Child Care Costs in Virginia[63]

Child Care Centers (1998)

	Virginia Beach		Norfolk		Fairfax	
Age of Child	Low	High	Low	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,680	$7,800	$4,680	$6,500	$8,892	$10,504
4 years	$4,160	$6,760	$2,860	$5,460	$7,020	$8,632
8 years	$1,820	$5,200	$3,900	$4,680	$6,240	$8,424

Family Child Care Homes (1998)

	Virginia Beach		Norfolk		Fairfax	
Age of Child	Low	High	Low	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,640	$6,240	$3,380	$4,680	$7,280	$9,256
4 years	$2,600	$5,200	$2,600	$3,900	$6,708	$8,580
8 years	$1,300	$4,160	$1,300	$3,380	$5,460	$7,540

Many Children in Virginia Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Virginia require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[64]	No
Does Virginia require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[65]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in Virginia in 1996[66]	$12,860
Annual turnover rate for family child care providers in Fairfax, Virginia[67]	35%
Number of child care centers in Virginia that were accredited as of 1997[68]	188

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Virginia[69]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[70]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	5	3-5	Yes
27 months	10	4-6	No
3 years	10	7-10	Yes
4 years	12	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in Virginia

Number of licensed child care centers in 1998[71]	2,303
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1998[72]	1,893
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[73]	23%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] "Fairfax County Community Needs Assessment," Excerpt from *State of Human Services Report, 1997* (Fairfax County, VA: December 1997), p. 28.

[7] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[8] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[9] Information on costs in Fairfax County from Fairfax County Office for Children, Fairfax, VA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998, information on costs in Norfolk and Virginia Beach from the Norfolk Planning Council, Norfolk, VA, April 1998. Annual costs calculated from weekly costs by CDF, assuming that children are in child care 52 weeks per year.

[10] Information on costs in Fairfax County from Fairfax County Office for Children, Fairfax, VA, collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998, information on costs in Norfolk and Virginia Beach from the Norfolk Planning Council, Norfolk, VA, April 1998. Annual costs calculated from weekly costs by CDF, assuming that children are in child care 52 weeks per year.

[11] Simpson, "Stay-home parents want to share in tax breaks," Norfolk, VA: *The Virginian-Pilot*, February 1, 1998, p. A1.

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[15] Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, *Valuing Families: The High Cost of Waiting for Child Care Sliding Fee Assistance* (Minneapolis, MN: 1995).

[16] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[17] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[18] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[19] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[20] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[21] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[22] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Virginia Department of Social Services, May 1998.

[23] Information from Fairfax County Office for Children, Fairfax, VA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[24] Information from Fairfax County Office for Children, Fairfax, VA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998. In some counties, there are local regulations that apply to family child care providers caring for five or fewer children. The stringency of these local regulations, however, varies from county to county.

[25] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools (October 16, 1997).

[26] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[27] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[28] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[29] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[30] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[31] Information from Fairfax County Office for Children, Fairfax, VA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[32] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[33] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[34] Information from Fairfax County Office for Children, Fairfax, VA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[35] Salmon, "In Struggle Over Child Care, a Push to Bolster Regulation System," Washington, DC: *The Washington Post*, February 15, 1998, p. V01.

[36] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[37] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[38] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[39] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[40] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[41] Simpson, "Caring for Kids before and after school...," Norfolk, VA: *The Virginian-Pilot*, August 15, 1997, p. B3.

[42] Information from Fairfax County Office for Children, Fairfax, VA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[43] Information provided by Kitty Wolf, Norfolk Planning Council, Norfolk, VA, April 1998.

[44] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[45] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[46] Data from the Virginia Department of Social Services, May 1998.

[47] Information on costs in Fairfax County from Fairfax County Office for Children, Fairfax, VA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998; information on costs in Norfolk and Virginia Beach from the Norfolk Planning Council, Norfolk, VA, April 1998. Annual costs calculated from weekly costs by CDF, assuming that children are in child care 52 weeks per year.

[48] Information from Fairfax County Office for Children, Fairfax, VA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[49] Information provided by Kitty Wolf, Norfolk Planning Council, Norfolk, VA, April 1998.

[50] Information from Fairfax County Office for Children, Fairfax, VA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[51] Information provided by Kitty Wolf, Norfolk Planning Council, Norfolk, VA, April 1998.

[52] "Fairfax County Community Needs Assessment," Excerpt from *State of Human Services Report, 1997* (Fairfax County, VA: December 1997), p. 28.

[53] Taylor, Leslie, "Welfare to Work Plan Creates Scramble for Day Care," *The Roanoke Times & World News*, April 26, 1998.

[54] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[55] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[56] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[57] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[58] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[59] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[60] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[61] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[62] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[63] Information on costs in Fairfax County from Fairfax County Office for Children, Fairfax, VA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998; information on costs in Norfolk and Virginia Beach from the Norfolk Planning Council, Norfolk, VA, April 1998. Annual costs calculated from weekly costs by CDF, assuming that children are in child care 52 weeks per year.

[64] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing.* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[65] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing.* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[66] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[67] Information from Fairfax County Office for Children, Fairfax, VA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[68] Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[69] Data from the Virginia Department of Social Services, May 1998.

[70] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[71] Information provided by Jane Brown, Virginia Department of Social Services, May 1998.

[72] Information provided by Jane Brown, Virginia Department of Social Services, May 1998.

[73] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

WEST VIRGINIA:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many West Virginia parents.

- Every day, about 77,500 children younger than six are in child care in West Virginia if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in West Virginia work to help support their families. An estimated 48 percent of West Virginia mothers with children younger than six, and 60 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in West Virginia and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in West Virginia.

Child care is costly for many families in West Virginia.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in West Virginia in 1997 was $2,088[6]—about two-thirds the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center.
- Many families in West Virginia earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in West Virginia with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 155,940 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[7]
- In West Virginia, child care for one four-year-old in a child care center cost $3,120 on average in 1996. Child care is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. For example, the average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Huntington was $3,484, with fees as high as $5,096; and the average cost in Mercer County was $3,510, with fees as high as $3,900.[8] These expenses are for only one child—families with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in West Virginia[9]

Child Care Centers (1996)

	Statewide		Huntington		Mercer County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,432	$6,760	$4,888	$6,760	$4,420	$4,940
4 years	$3,120	$5,096	$3,484	$5,096	$3,510	$3,900
8 years[10]	$2,396	n.a.	$2,396	n.a.	$2,001	$2,396

Family Child Care Homes (1996)

	Statewide		Wheeling		Lincoln County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,120	n.a.	$4,290	$6,500	$3,120	n.a.
4 years	$2,860	n.a.	$3,900	$5,200	$2,600	n.a.
8 years	$2,396	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	$2,396	n.a.

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in West Virginia, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *31 percent* of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in West Virginia are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- West Virginia's income cutoff for child care assistance is the lowest of any state in the nation. The state only allows low-income working families earning less than $15,000* (for a family of three) to be eligible for any help in paying for child care, although federal law allows the state to serve families earning up to $28,400.[11] *[Families already receiving assistance can continue doing so until their annual income reaches $18,744.]
- While West Virginia's very low income cutoffs make families earning over $15,000 ineligible for child care assistance, a family earning this much or significantly more would be eligible in a number of nearby states. For instance, families are eligible if they earn as much as $22,600 in Virginia, as much as $25,000 in Tennessee, and as much as $31,000 in Pennsylvania.[12]
- Even with its extremely low income cutoffs, West Virginia is concerned that it may not be able to continue providing child care assistance to all eligible families unless it receives additional funds.[13] While there were no waiting lists for subsidized care as of March 1998, the state anticipated new waiting lists would have to be started by late spring 1998 due to the implementation of West Virginia Works, the state's welfare-to-work program.[14]
- West Virginia does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 21 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, West Virginia spent 111 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[15]

Child care assistance gives parents the chance to improve their lives

A West Virginia mother of three, who was fortunate enough to receive help paying for child care, tells of the difference the assistance has made to her family: "..had it not been for (child care help), I do not believe that I would be where I am today—off of public assistance. While working and going to school the past several years as a single mother, I was determined to make life better for my children by striving to achieve my baccalaureate degree from Marshall University in pre-law in hopes of obtaining a better paying job. Although I have successfully completed school and now am gainfully employed, without doubt I could not have done this if I had to pay for child care myself. Having no relatives living close, (child care services) were my only hope...I am now in the position that I can pay for any necessary child care costs without assistance." This mother now plans to go on to law school.[16] *Unfortunately, many West Virginia families are not able to receive the child care assistance they need, and therefore lack the opportunities this mother has had.*

Many West Virginia families fortunate enough to receive child care assistance still face limited options due to inadequate state policies.

- Families in West Virginia who receive child care assistance still face enormous difficulties finding providers who will take care of their children, as the amount the state will pay for care is below market prices. In contrast, nearby states such as Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, and Virginia all pay at levels that allow families receiving child care subsidies a broader range of choices than in West Virginia.[17]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in West Virginia are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in West Virginia affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[18] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[19] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[20]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in West Virginia.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of West Virginia's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, West Virginia—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect West Virginia's children from harm.

- West Virginia is one of the many states that do not adequately protect their children. For example, the state allows a caregiver in a center to care for as many as 12 four-year-olds alone, although early childhood experts recommend no more than eight to 10. This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.[21]
- More than three-quarters (78 percent) of West Virginia's child care is not regulated in any way.[22] For example, West Virginia allows individuals caring for fewer than seven children in their homes to operate without having to meet *any* licensing health and safety protections (unless they receive state money).[23] As a result, a provider with a history of child abuse could legally care for as many as six children in his/her home, and a program could legally operate with safety hazards such as uncovered electrical outlets or poisonous substances that are not locked away. Most states do not allow providers to take care of this many children without having to meet some health and safety protections.

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[24] West Virginia is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[25] It is also one of 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior training.[26]
- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[27] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in West Virginia was only $12,080 (only slightly above minimum wage).[28] Furthermore, national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[29]
- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers; nationwide, about one-third of child care teachers leave their centers each year.[30] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers are only 6.6 percent.[31]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in West Virginia.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs. Yet such programs are scarce in West Virginia. In 1997, only about eight of West Virginia's 300 licensed child care centers (or 3 percent) were accredited.[32]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across West Virginia face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

Many families in West Virginia have trouble finding good child care in their communities.

- Many West Virginia families have few child care options due to an inadequate supply of care. One recent study found that nine of 55 counties in West Virginia had no licensed child care centers for families to use, and another fourteen only had one center.[33]
- Local child care resource and referral agencies help parents with the difficult task of finding the affordable, quality child care they want. Unfortunately, many families in West Virginia lack access to this type of assistance, as the resource and referral network only covers about half the state.[34] Many states fund child care resource and referral agencies so that all of their citizens have access to such help.

Parents cannot find the child care they need

West Virginia parents tell of their search for child care: "Our goal as working parents is to find stable, quality, affordable child care. Our children continue to grow each day and we continue to struggle each day as the state we live in lacks.. (in number) knowledgeable/interested providers or financial support to afford quality and we have been looking for four years." This family spends 30 percent of its net monthly income to purchase child care for its three children (ages 10, four, and two), one of whom has severe allergies.[35]

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many West Virginia school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many West Virginia families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 93,539 school-age children (ages five to 17) in West Virginia live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[36]
- West Virginia children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[37] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[38] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[39] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In West Virginia, only one in 12 public schools (898 or 8 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[40]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in West Virginia.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[41] This means as many as 9,300 babies in West Virginia are in child care if national patterns hold true.[42]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care West Virginia's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, while a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping very young children grow, West Virginia allows a caregiver to take care of as many as eight two-year-olds alone.[43] In contrast, early childhood experts recommend no more than four to six toddlers this age per adult. It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, play, and care for eight two-year-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency such as a fire.
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in West Virginia to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in West Virginia in 1996 averaged $3.432, but could cost as much as $6,760.[44]
- There is a severe shortage of infant/toddler care in West Virginia, and what exists is almost always full, according to the River Valley Child Development Services which helps families find child care in the Huntington area.[45]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in West Virginia

Number of children younger than one[46]	20,705
Number of children younger than six[47]	129,229
Number of children ages six to 17[48]	292,704
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[49]	9,300
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[50]	77,500
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[51]	48%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[52]	60%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in West Virginia

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200 percent of poverty)[53]	155,940
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in West Virginia[54]	$2,088

Annual Child Care Costs in West Virginia[55]

Child Care Centers (1996)

	Statewide		Huntington		Mercer County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,432	$6,760	$4,888	$6,760	$4,420	$4,940
4 years	$3,120	$5,096	$3,484	$5,096	$3,510	$3,900
8 years[56]	$2,396	n.a.	$2,396	n.a.	$2,001	$2,396

Family Child Care Homes (1996)

	Statewide		Wheeling		Lincoln County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,120	n.a.	$4,290	$6,500	$3,120	n.a.
4 years	$2,860	n.a.	$3,900	$5,200	$2,600	n.a.
8 years	$2,396	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	$2,396	n.a.

Many Children in West Virginia Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does West Virginia require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[57]	No
Does West Virginia require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[58]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in West Virginia in 1996[59]	$12,080
Percentage of child care centers in West Virginia that were accredited as of 1997[60]	3%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in West Virginia[61]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[62]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	4	3-5	Yes
27 months	8	4-6	No
3 years	10	7-10	Yes
4 years	12	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in West Virginia

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[63]	300
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1998[64]	10
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[65]	4,450
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[66]	8%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from River Valley Child Development, WV, collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[9] Information from River Valley Child Development, WV, collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[10] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[11] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Conversation with Cathy Forsythe, Huntington, WV: River Valley Child Development Services, March 1998.

[15] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[16] Link Child Care and Referral Services, Huntington, WV, *Book of Families* (Washington, DC: National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998).

[17] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[18] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[19] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[20] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[21] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[22] Conversation with Cathy Forsythe, Huntington, WV: River Valley Child Development Services, March 1998.

[23] Conversation with Cathy Forsythe, Huntington, WV: River Valley Child Development Services, March 1998.

[24] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools.

(October 16, 1997).

[25] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[26] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[27] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[28] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[29] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[30] National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW).

[31] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[32] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[33] Adams and Poersch, *Key Facts About Child Care and Early Education: A Briefing Book* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1997), p. E-3.

[34] Conversation with Cathy Forsythe, Huntington, WV: River Valley Child Development Services, March 1998.

[35] Child Care Resource Center, Wheeling, WV, *Book of Families* (Washington, DC: National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998).

[36] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[37] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[38] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[39] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[40] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[41] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[42] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[43] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[44] Information from River Valley Child Development, WV; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[45] Conversation with Cathy Forsythe, Huntington, WV: River Valley Child Development Services, March 1998.

[46] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[47] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[48] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[49] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics

Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[50] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[51] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[52] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[53] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[54] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[55] Information from River Valley Child Development, WV; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[56] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[57] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[58] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[59] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[60] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[61] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[62] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[63] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[64] The state implemented a new category of child care provider in October 1997, called "the family group home" which cares for seven to 12 children. By spring 1998, there were ten group homes in the entire state. Information from Judy Curry, West Virginia state child care administrator, April 1998.

[65] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[66] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

About the Children's Defense Fund

The Children's Defense Fund (CDF) exists to provide a strong and effective voice for all the children of America, who cannot vote, lobby, or speak for themselves. We pay particular attention to the needs of poor and minority children and those with disabilities. Our goal is to educate the nation about the needs of children and encourage preventive investment in children before they get sick, drop out of school, suffer family breakdown, or get into trouble.

CDF is a unique organization. CDF focuses on programs and policies that affect large numbers of children, rather than on helping families on a case-by-case basis. Our staff includes specialists in health, education, child welfare, mental health, child development, family income, and youth employment. CDF gathers data and disseminates information on key issues affecting children. We monitor the development and implementation of federal and state policies. We provide information, technical assistance, and support to a network of state and local child advocates, service providers, and public and private sector officials and leaders. We pursue an annual legislative agenda in the U.S. Congress and in states where we have offices. CDF educates hundreds of thousands of citizens annually about children's needs and responsible options for meeting those needs.

CDF is a national organization with roots in communities across America. Although our main office is in Washington, D.C., we reach out to towns and cities across the country to monitor the effects of changes in national and state policies and to help people and organizations concerned with what happens to children. CDF maintains state offices in Minnesota and Ohio, and local project offices in Marlboro County (South Carolina), Columbus, Greater Cincinnati, and New York City. CDF has developed cooperative projects with groups in many states.

The Black Community Crusade for Children (BCCC), developed by Black leaders and coordinated by CDF, is an initiative to mobilize the African American community behind a targeted effort to address the special problems facing Black children. The BCCC is part of CDF's overall work to ensure that *no* child is left behind and that *all* American children have a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, a Safe Start, and a Moral Start in life.

CDF is a private, nonprofit organization supported by foundations, corporate grants, and individual donations.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

25 Years

LEAVE NO CHILD BEHIND.

---

25 E Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
www.childrensdefense.org

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

THE WEST:

Child Care Challenges

- Alaska
- Arizona
- California
- Colorado
- Hawaii
- Idaho
- Montana
- Nevada
- New Mexico
- Oregon
- Utah
- Washington
- Wyoming

Gina Adams and Karen Schulman

Children's Defense Fund

May 1998

PS 0[illegible]80

Overview

This report is a regional compilation of several state reports, each of which examines the range of child care challenges facing families in the state. As shown in this volume, as well as the volumes for the other three regions of the U.S., families in *every state* are struggling to find quality child care they can afford—yet face serious problems because costs are too high, they cannot find the quality they are looking for, or the demands of their work schedules limit their choices. There is no state in the country that has successfully addressed the full range of problems facing families who need child care.

The problems described in this series highlight the need for a significant new commitment to child care. Increased state and federal investments, and greater involvement from other sectors, are essential to make improvements possible. We cannot continue to jeopardize the success of working families and their children. Because of the urgency of these problems, the Children's Defense Fund and thousands of national, state, and local organizations and individuals are working together to improve the quality and affordability of child care and after-school activities for America's children and families. To learn more about these efforts, call (202) 662-3671 or visit CDF's website at www.childrensdefense.org.

While this series focuses on the child care problems facing families across the country, there are positive steps that states and communities are taking to address these issues. Many of these initiatives are described in other CDF child care publications, such as *State Developments in Child Care and Early Education: 1997*. Yet despite these efforts, very serious challenges remain in every state, and much more must be done to help parents get the quality, affordable care they need to support their families.

Acknowledgments

We are grateful to the many individuals and organizations who helped on this project. They include the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA), who worked with us to survey selected state CCR&R agencies for information on child care costs, as well as on other issues. Our thanks go to key NACCRRA members and staff—including Diane Adams, Fran Kipnis, Kirsta Millar, Yasmina Vinci, Bobbie Weber, and Gail Wilson—as well as the many state and local child care resource and referral agency staff who took the time to answer the survey and verify the information. We are also grateful to state child care advocates across the country who helped to document the child care needs in their communities and provided input on drafts.

Other individuals and organizations provided invaluable assistance. These include Marcie Whitebook and Marci Andrews of the Center for the Child Care Workforce; Andrea Camp and staff of the Lifetime Television's child care initiative "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment"; and Beth Miller, Linda Sisson, and Barbara Taylor representing the school-age child care community.

Many CDF staff members and interns helped us with this project as well. They include Neelum Arya, Helen Blank, Anourack Chinyavong, Danielle Contreras, Diane Minor, Nicole Oxendine Poersch, Elizabeth Reynolds, Daniel Stein, and Kanya Williams. We would like to extend our particular appreciation to Jody Wright, whose work was essential to this project.

Finally, we also would like to thank the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the A.L. Mailman Foundation, and the Prudential Foundation, who provided support for this effort.

Copyright © 1998 Children's Defense Fund

CDF grants blanket permission to copy any portion of this document, waiving all other applicable copyright protection, if it is to be used in work for and on behalf of children. For all other uses, please contact the Managing Editor, CDF Publications, for permission to reprint.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

THE WEST:

Child Care Challenges

- Alaska
- Arizona
- California
- Colorado
- Hawaii
- Idaho
- Montana
- Nevada
- New Mexico
- Oregon
- Utah
- Washington
- Wyoming

Gina Adams and Karen Schulman

Children's Defense Fund
May 1998

ALASKA:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Alaska parents.

- Every day, about 36,200 children younger than six are in child care in Alaska if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Alaska work to help support their families. An estimated 58 percent of Alaska mothers with children younger than six, and 77 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Alaska and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income.[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Alaska.

Child care is costly for many families in Alaska.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Alaska in 1997 was $2,552[6]—less than *half* the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Anchorage.
- Many families in Alaska earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Alaska with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 41,400 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty) in Alaska.[7]
- Child care in Alaska for an infant or preschooler easily costs an average of $5,000 to $6,000 per year. In Anchorage, for example, the average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center is $5,784, with fees as high as $6,900.[8] These expenses are for only one child. Families with more than one child in care, or with an infant (for whom care is more costly) pay even more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Anchorage, Alaska (1998)[9]

Child Care Centers		
Age of child	Average	High
12 months	$6,660	$7,560
4 years	$5,784	$6,900
8 years[10]	$4,016	$5,375
Family Child Care Homes		
Age of child	Average	High
12 months	$5,844	$8,400
4 years	$5,784	$6,900

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year old in a child care center at the average price in Anchorage, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *58 percent* of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in Alaska are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Many families in Alaska who are eligible for child care assistance are unable to get it due to inadequate funding. As of December 1997, more than 500 children (325 families) were on the waiting list for child care assistance.[11] Research has shown that parents waiting for child care assistance are likely to face serious financial difficulties, have difficulty staying employed, go on welfare, and/or have serious concerns about the quality of their children's care because they cannot afford high quality care.[12]
- Alaska's waiting list is likely to underestimate the number of eligible families who need assistance, as the state reported that it is not confident that all eligible families *know* they can get child care assistance.[13]
- Inadequate funding for child care assistance and the lack of affordable child care options threaten Alaska's ability to successfully move families from welfare to work—a situation that is likely to get worse in coming years as work requirements rise. In a recent survey, Alaska reported that, without additional funds, it is not confident that it will be able to meet the demand for child care assistance generated by the increase in welfare work requirements.[14] Low-income working families who are not on welfare may end up losing assistance as more families on welfare need help. Furthermore, with thousands of additional recipients moving into work activities, the need for child care services in Alaska is increasing, and it is not clear that quality care is available for them.[15]
- Alaska does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only $1.70 out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Alaska spent 14 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[16]

Child care assistance helps low-income Alaska parents work

Christina, who lives in Juneau, earns just $7,500 per year and is struggling to support her four-month-old child Hayden without returning to welfare. While she receives some child care assistance, she is still finding it difficult to obtain quality child care for Hayden: "If daycare assistance wasn't available I would not be able to return to work for I couldn't afford daycare and pay my bills—I would have to go back on welfare. Finding daycare has been stressful because child care people aren't required to have any training or education in how to care for children, not just anybody should be allowed to be daycare people—this bothers me a lot."[17]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Alaska are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Alaska affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[18] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[19] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[20]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Alaska.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Alaska's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Alaska—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Alaska's children from harm.
- Alaska in one of many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, the state met recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for only three of the six age groups examined.[21] For example, the state allowed a single caregiver to care for as many as six 18-month-olds, although early childhood experts recommend no more than three to five. This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.
- As of January 1998, almost one out of six of the licensed centers in Anchorage (20 of the 112 licensed child care centers in the city) had provisional licenses because of concerns that the centers were violating regulations.[22]
- Alaska allows individuals caring for fewer than five children in their homes to operate without having to meet any licensing health and safety protections.[23] This means, for example, that a provider with a history of child abuse could legally care for as many as four children in his/her home, and that a program could legally operate with safety hazards such as uncovered electrical outlets or poisonous substances that are not locked away.

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[24] Alaska is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have any early childhood training prior to serving children.[25] It is also one of 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior training.[26]
- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100),[27] and tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[28] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Alaska was only $16,060, which is less than the average wage in the state for bartenders, janitors, hairdressers, animal caretakers, or fish and game wardens.[29]
- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers; nationwide, about one-third of child care teachers leave their centers each year.[30] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[31]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Alaska.

- Many parents want their children to get the high-quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs. Yet such programs are scarce in Alaska. Only about 12 of Alaska's 227 licensed child care centers (or 5 percent) were accredited in 1997.[32] Given that 10 of these were in Anchorage, it is clear that most communities in the state have no accredited centers at all.[33]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Alaska face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

Many families in Alaska have trouble finding good child care in their communities.

- In 1997, there were far more Alaska parents looking for child care than there were vacancies for them to use. For example, the number of parents requesting help finding child care from Child Care Connection, the child care resource and referral agency in Anchorage which helps families find care, was significantly higher than the number of vacancies in homes and centers. These shortages existed for every age group, although the most severe shortages were for babies and toddlers (children younger than three) where there were more than *twice* as many parents looking for care than available places.[34]

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Alaska school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Alaska families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 18,160 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Alaska live in families with incomes below the poverty line.[35] [In Alaska, the poverty line for a family of three was about $16,670 in 1997—due to the higher cost of living, Alaska has a higher poverty line than the rest of the country.]
- Alaska children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[36] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[37] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[38] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Alaska, less than one in five public schools (478 or 17 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[39]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Alaska.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[40] This means as many as 4,400 babies in Alaska are in child care if national patterns hold true.[41]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Alaska's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, while a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping babies grow, Alaska allows a single caregiver to care for five nine-month-old babies. In contrast, early childhood experts recommend no more than three or four babies this age per adult.[42] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, diaper, play, and care for five active nine-month-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency.
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Alaska to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. For example, child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Anchorage averages $6,660, but can cost as much as $7,560.[43]
- There is a shortage of care for infants and toddlers, according to the Child Care Connection in Anchorage, which provides resource and referral services for families looking for child care. In 1997, the agency had more than twice as many requests for infant and toddler care as it was able to fill. The agency received 420 requests for infant care but had only 193 vacancies, and received 620 requests for toddler care for only 234 vacancies.

Families with children with special needs have serious problems finding child care

Andrea, an Anchorage mother, is receiving welfare and is enrolled in a job training program. She is receiving a subsidy that covers the cost of child care—an expense she could not afford with an annual gross income of just $11,076 per year. The subsidy has not solved all her child care problems, though, since she still cannot find suitable child care for her four-year-old son Tyler and her six-year-old son Garrett: "It's been very hard to find a child care that will take a child with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD). Many people don't want the responsibility and others don't have the training or patience to work with children experiencing disabilities."[44]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Alaska

Number of children younger than one[45]	9,769
Number of children younger than six[46]	60,412
Number of children ages six to 17[47]	123,975
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[48]	4,400
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[49]	36,200
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[50]	58%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[51]	77%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Alaska

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[52]	41,400
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Alaska[53]	$2,552

Annual Child Care Costs in Anchorage, Alaska[54]

Child Care Centers (1998)

Age of Child	Average	High
12 months	$6,660	$7,560
4 years	$5,784	$6,900
8 years[55]	$4,016	$5,375

Family Child Care Homes (1998)

Age of Child	Average	High
12 months	$5,844	$8,400
4 years	$5,784	$6,900

Many Children in Alaska Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Alaska require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[56]	No
Does Alaska require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[57]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in Alaska in 1996[58]	$16,060
Percentage of child care centers in Alaska that were accredited as of 1997[59]	5%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Alaska[60]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[61]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	5	3-4	No
18 months	6	3-5	No
27 months	6	4-6	Yes
3 years	10	7-10	Yes
4 years	10	8-10	Yes

Other Child Care Indicators in Alaska

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[62]	227
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[63]	31
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[64]	484
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[65]	17%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from Child Care Connection, Anchorage, AK; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[9] Information from Child Care Connection, Anchorage, AK; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[10] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[11] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[12] Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, *Valuing Families: The High Cost of Waiting for Child Care Sliding Fee Assistance* (Minneapolis, MN: 1995).

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[15] State of Alaska, Division of Public Assistance, "Welfare Reform Briefing Paper" (Juneau, AK: State of Alaska, 1996).

[16] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[17] National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, *Book of Families*, (Washington, DC: National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998). Information collected by the local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency.

[18] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[19] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[20] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[21] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

477

[22] Demer, "Child Care Woes Hamper Putting People to Work," Anchorage, AK: *The Anchorage Daily News*, January 6, 1998, p. 1B.

[23] Data from the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Juneau, AK: 1996.

[24] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools. (October 16, 1997).

[25] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[26] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[27] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[28] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[29] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[30] National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW).

[31] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[32] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[33] Information from Child Care Connection, Anchorage, AK; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[34] Information from Child Care Connection, Anchorage, AK; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[35] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[36] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[37] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[38] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[39] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[40] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[41] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[42] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[43] Information from Child Care Connection, Anchorage, AK; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[44] National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, *Book of Families*, (Washington, DC: National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998). Information collected by the local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency.

[45] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[46] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[47] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[48] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[49] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[50] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[51] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[52] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[53] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[54] Information from Child Care Connection, Anchorage, AK; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[55] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[56] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[57] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[58] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[59] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[60] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[61] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[62] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[63] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[64] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[65] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

ARIZONA:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Arizona parents.

- Every day, about 246,900 children younger than six are in child care in Arizona if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Arizona work to help support their families. An estimated 58 percent of Arizona mothers with children younger than six, and 74 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Arizona and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Arizona.

Child care is costly for many families in Arizona.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Arizona in 1997 was $2,009[6]—*half* the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Tucson or Phoenix.
- Many families in Arizona earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Arizona with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year, and there are about 428,490 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[7]
- In Arizona, child care for one four-year-old in a child care center in 1998 can easily cost an average of $3,000 to $4,000 per year. Child care is expensive for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. For example, the average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center is $4,188 in Tucson, $4,076 in Phoenix, and $3,359 in Yuma County.[8] These expenses are for only one child—parents with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Arizona[9]

Child Care Centers (1998)

	Phoenix		Tucson		Yuma County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,738	n.a.	$5,159	$7,020	$4,030	$4,420
4 years	$4,076	n.a.	$4,188	$6,240	$3,359	$5,460
8 years[10]	$3,608	n.a.	$3,379	$6,864	$2,974	$5,200

Family Child Care Homes (1998)

	Phoenix		Tucson		Yuma County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,274	n.a.	$3,902	$9,100	$3,385	$6,760
4 years	$3,997	n.a.	$3,870	$9,100	$3,226	$6,500
8 years	$3,902	n.a.	$3,839	$9,100	$3,147	$4,680

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year old in a child care center at the average price in Phoenix, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *41 percent* of their income for child care.

Arizona families struggle to afford child care

Sandra, an Arizona grandmother, explains how difficult it is for parents to afford child care: "My oldest daughter works full time to support her child (two-year-old Breanna). She has her own apartment and pays rent, utilities, and a car payment so she can continue to work. She does not qualify for child care assistance because she makes a few hundred too much. So therefore...if she does not have a relative to take care of Breanna, they cannot go out to eat a hamburger, can only purchase the bare necessities from the grocery store, etc. I am outraged that someone who works so hard to support themselves and their child cannot get a break!!!!! So you struggle to keep your pride and you work and you pray that your child is getting the care she needs and deserves. I mean, how do you really know? When you can't really afford to pay someone what they deserve to be paid for taking care of your child. You search for someone willing to take less because that is all that you have. But as a grandmother, I sometimes fear that my grandchildren may also be getting less."[11]

Many low-income working families in Arizona are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Even though Arizona recently raised their income cutoff (to take effect in July 1998), the state still ranks among the bottom 20 states in making low-income families eligible for child care assistance. When compared to income cutoffs in other states, 30 states allowed families with higher incomes to receive state subsidies.[12] Even with the higher cutoff, the state will only allow low-income working families earning about $22,000 (for a family of three) to be eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $31,800.[13]

- Despite the recent increase, Arizona's eligibility cutoff levels continue to be lower than most of its neighbors. While a low-income working family of three earning $22,500 will not be eligible for assistance in Arizona under the new higher cutoff levels, the same family would be eligible for help in California, Colorado, Nevada, and New Mexico.[14]
- Even with Arizona's low income cutoffs, the state is not confident that all eligible families know they can get child care assistance, or that it could serve all eligible families if they knew they could get child care help. Furthermore, the situation is likely to get even worse in coming years, as more families are required to move from welfare to work. In a recent survey, the state reported that, without additional funds, it may not be able to meet the demand for child care assistance generated by the increase in welfare work requirements.[15]
- Arizona does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 32 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Arizona spent 70 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[16]

Arizona families who are fortunate enough to receive child care assistance still face financial hardship and limited options due to low state payments for care.

- Families in Arizona who receive child care assistance still face difficulties finding providers who will take care of their children, as the amount the state Department of Economic Security (DES) will pay for care is below market prices. As a consequence, providers either have to ask parents to make up the difference between the state's low rate and the rate charged by the provider (in addition to the parent fees required by the state), or refuse to take care of children receiving help from the state. While the state will raise rates in July 1998, the new rates will *still* not be sufficient to allow low-income families a broad range of choices. Specifically:
  - ⇒ The new state rates are already out of date, as they will be based on what providers charged in *1996*. Furthermore, the rates will be set at levels below the amount charged by *half* of the providers in the state in that year. Consequently, many providers will still be unable to accept state payments as "payment in full", meaning that significant numbers are still likely to require low-income parents to make up the difference on top of their existing copayments.[17]
  - ⇒ California, New Mexico, Nevada, and Utah all paid rates that allowed families receiving child care subsidies a broader range of choices than in Arizona.[18]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Arizona are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Arizona affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[19] While research shows that *good* quality child

482

care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[20] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[21]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Arizona.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Arizona's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Arizona—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Arizona's children from harm.
- Arizona is one of the many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, the state did not meet recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for *any* of the six age groups examined.[22] For example, the state allowed a caregiver to care for as many as 13 three-year-olds or 15 four-year-olds without any help, although early childhood educators recommend no more than seven to 10 per adult. This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although in most states hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[23] Arizona is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[24] It is also one of 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior training.[25]
- Individual programs can choose to require more training or education than under state licensing law. However, only 39 percent of Arizona's child care centers require more than a high school diploma or GED to be a teacher.[26]
- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers nationwide do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[27] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Arizona was only $12,320.[28] In Arizona's child care centers, assistant teachers earned just $10,500 per year, and even directors earned only $20,000 per year.[29]
- In addition to low salaries, child care providers tend to receive no benefits or paid leave, according to national and local studies.[30] For example, a recent wage and benefits survey in Arizona found that one out of three child care operations in the state provide no health insurance to their staff.[31]
- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates for family child care providers in Arizona are high. For example, almost one out of three (31 percent) family child care providers in Yuma and one out of six

(16 percent) family child care providers in Tucson go out of business annually.[32] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[33]

Parents worry about the quality of their children's care

Ann, a mother from Chandler, discusses the importance of improving the quality of child care: "We need to have reliable, quality care providers with a desire to take care of our young ones and with adequate training to do so. The turnover in child care facilities due to low pay directly impacts our children and their well-being. I hate the thought of having to put my newborn and seven-year-old son anywhere but our current financial situation forces both my husband and myself to work. With stricter regulations from the state on in-home day care, I would feel significantly more comfortable, but there aren't the resources in our state to accommodate in-home studies, etc....."[34]

- Given the low wages for child care staff, it is not surprising that many child care programs in Arizona are having difficulty finding qualified staff. For example, there are more than 700 child-care jobs, from assistant teachers to directors, listed with the statewide Child Care Job Bank in Arizona on a typical day, but only about 200 people are looking for positions at a time.[35]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Arizona face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

> *"Every day we get calls from parents, incredibly frustrated and panicked because they have to work and cannot find a place they can afford where they are comfortable leaving their children."*
>
> *Susan Wilkins, Executive Director of the Association for Supportive Child Care, which runs a child care resource and referral program that helps parents find child care.*[36]

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Arizona school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Arizona families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 197,389 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Arizona live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[37]

- Arizona children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[38] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[39] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of

problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[40] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.

- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Arizona, only two out of five public schools (1,057 or 43 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[41]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Arizona.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[42] This means as many as 31,600 babies in Arizona are in child care if national patterns hold true.[43]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Arizona's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping babies and toddlers grow, Arizona allows a single caregiver to care for six 18-month-old toddlers. In contrast, early childhood educators recommend no more than three to five toddlers this age per adult.[44] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, diaper, play, and care for six active 18-month-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency.
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Arizona to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Tucson in 1998 averages $5,159, but can cost as much as $7,020.[45]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Arizona

Number of children younger than one[46]	70,310
Number of children younger than six[47]	411,502
Number of children ages six to 17[48]	738,684
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[49]	31,600
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[50]	246,900
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[51]	58%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[52]	74%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Arizona

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[53]	428,490
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Arizona[54]	$2,009

Annual Child Care Costs in Arizona[55]

Child Care Centers (1998)

	Phoenix		Tucson		Yuma County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,738	n.a.	$5,159	$7,020	$4,030	$4,420
4 years	$4,076	n.a.	$4,188	$6,240	$3,359	$5,460
8 years[56]	$3,608	n.a.	$3,379	$6,864	$2,974	$5,200

Family Child Care Homes (1998)

	Phoenix		Tucson		Yuma County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,274	n.a.	$3,902	$9,100	$3,385	$6,760
4 years	$3,997	n.a.	$3,870	$9,100	$3,226	$6,500
8 years	$3,902	n.a.	$3,839	$9,100	$3,147	$4,680

Many Children in Arizona Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Arizona require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[57]	No
Does Arizona require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[58]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in Arizona in 1996[59]	$12,320
Annual turnover rates for family child care providers[60]	Tucson: 16% Yuma: 31%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Arizona[61]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[62]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	5	3-4	No
18 months	6	3-5	No
27 months	8	4-6	No
3 years	13	7-10	No
4 years	15	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in Arizona

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[63]	1,483
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[64]	203
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[65]	1,300
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[66]	43%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information on costs in Tucson and Yuma County from Child and Family Resources, Inc., Tucson, AZ: collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, May 1998; and information on costs in Phoenix from Child Care Resource and Referral, Tempe, AZ, May 1998.

[9] Information on costs in Tucson and Yuma County from Child and Family Resources, Inc., Tucson, AZ: collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, May 1998; and information on costs in Phoenix from Child Care Resource and Referral, Tempe, AZ, May 1998.

[10] Annual costs for school-age care were calculated from a weekly cost determined by the resource and referral agency using the Carefinder database. The database includes costs for both full-time care (for example, programs during summer vacations) and part-time care (before- and after-school care during the school year).

[11] From Lifetime Television's on-line project "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment," which collects stories about child care from families around the country. It is found at www.lifetimetv.com.

[12] Bland, "Child-Care Proposals Target Working Poor," Phoenix, AZ: *The Arizona Republic*, January 29, 1998, p. B1, and *Child Care Unaffordable for Working Families—Press Release* (Phoenix, AZ: Children's Action Alliance, March 11, 1998).

[13] Information about Arizona's new policies provided by child care staff at Children's Action Alliance, Phoenix, AZ, May 26, 1998. Comparison to other states from Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Information about Arizona's new policies provided by child care staff at Children's Action Alliance, Phoenix, AZ, May 26, 1998. Comparison to other states from Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[15] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[16] Adams and Poersch. *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[17] Communication with child care staff at Children's Action Alliance, Phoenix, AZ, May 26, 1998.

[18] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[19] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[20] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[21] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[22] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[23] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools. (October 16, 1997).

[24] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[25] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[26] *Arizona Child Care Fact Sheet—Press Release* (Phoenix, AZ: Children's Action Alliance, March 11, 1998).

[27] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[28] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[29] Baker, "Field Faces Shortage of Qualified Workers," Phoenix, AZ: *The Arizona Republic*, March 8, 1998, p. B1.

[30] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[31] Baker, "Field Faces Shortage of Qualified Workers," Phoenix, AZ: *The Arizona Republic*, March 8, 1998, p. B1.

[32] Information from Child and Family Resources, Inc., Tucson, AZ; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[33] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[34] From Lifetime Television's online project "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment" which collects stories about child care from families around the country. It is found at www.lifetimetv.com.

[35] Information from Susan Wilkins, executive director of the Association for Supportive Child Care, which started the Child Care Job Bank last fall, quoted in Baker, "Field Faces Shortage of Qualified Workers," Phoenix, AZ: *The Arizona Republic*, March 8, 1998, p. B1.

[36] *Child Care Unaffordable for Working Families—Press Release* (Phoenix, AZ: Children's Action Alliance, March 11, 1998).

[37] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[38] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[39] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[40] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School", *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[41] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[42] National Center for Education Statistics, *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[43] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[44] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[45] Information on costs in Tucson and Yuma County from Child and Family Resources, Inc., Tucson, AZ; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, May 1998; and information on costs in Phoenix from Child Care Resource and Referral, Tempe, AZ, May 1998.

[46] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[47] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[48] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[49] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[50] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[51] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[52] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[53] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[54] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[55] Information on costs in Tucson and Yuma County from Child and Family Resources, Inc., Tucson, AZ; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, May 1998; and information on costs in Phoenix from Child Care Resource and Referral, Tempe, AZ, May 1998.

[56] Annual costs for school-age care were calculated from a weekly cost determined using the Carefinder database. The database includes costs for both full-time care (for example, programs during summer vacations) and part-time care (before- and after-school care during the school year).

[57] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[58] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[59] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[60] Information from Child and Family Resources, Inc., Tucson, AZ; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, January 1998.

[61] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[62] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[63] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[64] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[65] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[66] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

CALIFORNIA:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many California parents.

- Every day, about 1,990,500 children younger than six are in child care in California if national patterns hold true.* This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours or more a week until they reach school age. *[This includes the children of both working and non-working parents, children cared for by relatives and non-relatives, and children cared for outside the home and within their own homes.]
- Most mothers in California work to help support their families. An estimated 56 percent of California mothers with children younger than six, and 72 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in California and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in California.

Child care is costly for many families in California.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in California in 1997 was $2,731[6]—about *half* the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center.
- Many families in California earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in California with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 3,307,000 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[7]
- In California, child care for one four-year-old in a child care center cost $4,888 on average in 1997, with fees as high as $10,556. Child care is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. The average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Alameda County was $6,032, with fees as high as $7,488; and the average annual cost in Fresno County was $5,044, with fees as high as $6,500.[8] These expenses are for only one child—parents with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

- California families are struggling with soaring housing and child care costs, especially in the San Francisco Bay Area. San Francisco has the highest average annual cost for infant care in the state at $9,360, according to Children NOW's "California Report '97."[9]

Annual Cost of Child Care in California[10]

Child Care Centers (1996-97)

Age of child	Statewide		Alameda County		Fresno County	
	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$7,020	$12,168	$6,864	$9,880	$6,552	$7,176
4 years	$4,888	$10,556	$6,032	$7,488	$5,044	$6,500
8 years[11]	$3,594	$7,188	$4,133	$6,529	$3,414	$4,493

Family Child Care Homes (1996-97)

Age of child	Statewide		Alameda County		Fresno County	
	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	n.a.	n.a.	$5,668	$10,400	$4,904	$7,800
4 years	n.a.	n.a.	$5,200	$7,800	$4,607	$7,800
8 years	n.a.	n.a.	$4,133	$7,188	$2,935	$6,589

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in California, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *56 percent* of their income for child care.

> *A 32-year-old mother living in Anderson, CA, writes: "Quality child care is nearly impossible to find, not to mention affordable. Half of what I make goes to daycare and related costs! There has to be a better way."*[12]

Many low-income working families in California are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- California is unable to serve all eligible families who apply for child care assistance—the state estimates that it is serving no more than 30 percent of eligible families,[13] and reported to the U.S. General Accounting Office that 200,000 families are on the waiting lists for child care assistance in the state.[14] The waiting list includes about 6,000 children in San Francisco[15] and 17,000 children in Orange County.[16] Research has shown that parents waiting for child care assistance are likely to face serious financial difficulties, have difficulty staying employed, go on welfare, and/or have serious concerns about the quality of their children's care because they cannot afford good quality care.[17]

- California's enormous waiting list underestimates the need for child care, as the state is not confident that all eligible families know they can get help paying their child care expenses.[18] Many families who do know they are eligible are unlikely to sign up because they know that there are many families before them on the list.

- The situation is likely to get worse in coming years, as more families are required to move from welfare to work. In a recent survey, California reported that, without additional funds, it is not confident that it will be able to meet the demand for child care assistance generated by the increase in welfare work requirements.[19]

While child care assistance can help parents work and can help them give their children a strong start...

Edelmira Sanchez shows the difference that child care assistance can make for hard-working families. A few years ago, after a painful divorce, Edelmira was working two jobs just to feed her children, and was worrying constantly about who would care for her two preschool-age children while she worked from dawn into the night. At that point, she was making $8.50 an hour, paying $700 in rent, and paying a sitter $125 a week. It was so difficult that she found herself wondering if she would have to send her children to her mother in Mexico. "I told myself I couldn't make it anymore, that I should not be alive," she said. "It was so hard, because I would watch them sleeping, and I knew I couldn't do it." One day a co-worker suggested that Sanchez call a few child care centers to see if she could get child care assistance. "When I called, I prayed that I would qualify." Sanchez qualified for fully subsidized care. She was able to use the $500 a month she had spent on a baby-sitter to buy more nutritious food and some new clothes for the children. The center had an immediate impact on Luis and Natalie. "When I put my kids there, they started developing physically and emotionally," she said. "There was a very positive attitude on the part of the teachers."[20]

...too many low-income parents in California are unable to get the help they need

Gilbert Ayala lives with his three-year-old son in a single rented room in San Jose, California. His wife is hospitalized with schizophrenia. With his wife away, it was difficult for Gilbert to work and care for his son. His parents are dead, and his in-laws work full-time and already have a house full of children. As a consequence, he lost his job and studio apartment. He is on welfare and three waiting lists for child care help. Gilbert is hoping for child care assistance so he can get a job and a home to reunite his family. "I was trying to find a job. Trying to find day care. I couldn't do it all. I just couldn't do it," Ayala says.[21]

- California does not invest enough in helping families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 95 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, California spent seven times as much in state funds on corrections and prisons than on child care and early education.[22]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in California are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in California affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[23] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[24] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[25]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in California.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of California's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, California—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect California's children from harm.
- California is one of the many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, the state met recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for only three of the six age groups examined.[26] For example, it allows a single caregiver to care for 12 three-year-olds without help, although early childhood experts recommend no more than seven to ten. This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need, much less handle emergencies.

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[27] California requires family child care providers to have only 15 hours of training before serving children.[28]
- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100).[29] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in California was only $14,940,[30] and national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[31]
- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in California—in 1996, about three out of every 10 child care teachers left their jobs.[32] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[33]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in California.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in California. In 1998, only about 528 of California's 12,930 licensed child care centers (or 4 percent) are accredited.[34]

Reduced class size in the public schools has created a shortage of qualified teachers in child care

A reduction of class sizes in California's public schools, in combination with the low salaries in child care, has resulted in difficulties for many child care providers and the children they serve. Providers struggle to find and retain qualified staff, as many teachers are being lured away from their jobs in child care centers and preschools to better paying jobs in elementary schools. This has, in turn, has caused a number of problems:

- *Programs have had difficulty finding teachers, and have had to accept less qualified staff. Both private and public day care providers report that they are losing their most qualified employees (particularly those with bachelor's and master's degrees) to the public schools.*[35]
- *The shortage of child care teachers has led some centers, such as the Fairfax/San Anselmo Children's Center and the Twin Oaks Children's Center in San Rafael, to close their doors.*[36]
- *The smaller classes in the public schools have created a need for more classroom facilities, forcing child care centers to compete for limited classroom space.*[37]

As reported in the Sacramento Bee, "many in the [child care] industry say the issue boils down to the fact that day care centers cannot afford to pay competitive wages or offer attractive benefits... But daycare providers say they cannot simply raise salaries and pass the cost on to parents. 'Some parents pay more for child care than for their mortgage. You're not going to get more out of that group,'" reported one expert.

"Mary Breeding, the owner/director of Kinder World in South Land Park, has experienced the shortage firsthand. First, she lost a teacher to the public schools. Then, preparing for one of her teachers to go on maternity leave, Breeding began advertising an opening for someone with two years of experience and 30 units of early childhood education course work.... After two months without any success, Breeding reduced the criteria to one year of experience and twelve units. It still took another month before she found [someone to fill the position]. 'This is going to be a serious problem in the very near future,' she said. 'Where are we going to get the teachers?'"[38]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across California face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

Many families in California have trouble finding good child care in their communities.

- A look at the supply of child care in Sacramento provides one example of the difficulties parents throughout the state face as they try to find good care for their children. Many centers in the county find that it is not cost-effective to offer infant care, since more staff are needed to provide the one-on-one attention that babies require. School-age care is also not cost-effective for centers to offer, because school-age children are in care for fewer hours and because of transportation costs. As a result, there is a limited supply of care for these age groups. The shortages may only become more severe, since as of November 1997, the county projected they would need to come up with nearly 27,000 day care slots (for children of all ages) over the next five years.[39]

California parents are struggling to find quality affordable care

> *"I am the parent of a five-year-old daughter and feel lucky to have found, and been able to afford, quality child care. I am now the president of the board of directors of the preschool she attended before moving on to kindergarten. I am shocked at the numbers of people trying to find quality child care in our area. It's a desperate situation. Not only is quality child care difficult to find, we need to think about the people who couldn't afford it even if they found it. It's shocking to me how little we do to invest in the future of our children. Please help children get a good start in life by helping create affordable child care."*[40]
>
> *Christine S., a 38-year-old mother living in Campbell*

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many California school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many California families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 1,388,380 school-age children (ages five to 17) in California live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[41] Children NOW reports that 46 percent of California's public school youngsters live in low-income families.[42]
- California children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[43] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[44] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[45] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In California, for example, less than one of every three public schools (7,319 or 31 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[46]
- Further evidence of the shortage of school-age care was provided by a 1995 study of child care needs in selected cities across the country, which reported that school-age child care was in short supply in San Francisco.[47] Similarly, many families living in low-income areas of Los Angeles County have difficulty finding child care. For example, a recent report presented to the L.A. Board of Supervisors found serious shortages of child care in low-income Los Angeles communities, with the result that latchkey children are ending up unsupervised in county parks and libraries when school is not in session. The report found that parks and libraries are commonly used as informal after-school arrangements, though there are no staff to formally supervise the children to make sure that they are safe and involved in constructive activities.[48]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in California.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[49] This means as many as 240,400 babies in California are in child care if national patterns hold true.[50]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care California's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping very young children grow, California allows one adult to care for 12 two-year-olds (age 27 months), *twice* as many children as recommended by early childhood experts.[51] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, play, and care for 12 active two-year-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency.
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in California to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in California in 1997 averaged $7,020, but could cost as much as $12,168.[52]
- The supply of infant care in California is very limited. For example, 36 percent of children whose parents requested referrals for child care in 1996 in California were infants under two, but only four percent of the center slots were licensed for children of this age group.[53] Shortages of infant care are evident throughout the state. The California CCR&R network reports that only about three or four percent of the spaces in licensed centers are available for children younger than two in Riverside County and San Bernardino County.[54] Shortages of infant care have also been identified in San Francisco.[55]

Other families in California face shortages of care as well—such as low-income families and families where parents work nontraditional hours.

- A recent study found that access to preschool and child care programs in California is "grossly unequal," with affluent children having a much greater opportunity to participate in programs than poor youngsters. Upper-income children in Los Angeles are twice as likely to find preschool slots as are some children living in low-income areas. While affluent areas of Los Angeles had 269 slots per 1,000 youngsters, localities in California with high concentrations of poor Latino families had just 105 child-care slots per 1000 children and poor neighborhoods with a high concentration of African American and white residents reported 152 slots per 1000. Child care slots were the most limited for families in Fresno, where there were 40 percent fewer preschool slots than in Los Angeles County.[56]
- Care during nontraditional hours (evenings, weekends, and overnight) is in short supply, particularly in child care centers. Only 2 percent of child care centers offer care during these hours. Family child care providers are more likely to provide such care, with 29 percent offering care during nontraditional hours.[57]

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The shortage of quality, affordable child care may prevent California parents from moving from welfare to work.

- Various studies and other evidence show that child care can mean the difference between welfare and work for California families:
    - ⇒ County officials report that 52 percent of Ventura County welfare recipients cited a lack of child care as the main reason they cannot hold a job.[58]
    - ⇒ In a poll of 800 public aid recipients in Orange County, conducted by the county Social Service Agency, almost one in three (32 percent) listed child care problems as a major barrier to employment.[59]
    - ⇒ In 1995, staff at the child care resource and referral agency in San Francisco reported that young mothers had lost their jobs and returned to welfare because they were unable to find care for their infants.[60]

- While reliable child care is a necessity if parents are to be able to move from welfare to work, in many communities in California the child care supply is not sufficient to meet the projected increase in demand.
    - ⇒ In many communities, there are more families who will need child care than there are slots available to serve them. There are a total of 58,106 existing child care spaces (most of which are already filled) in licensed centers and in-home programs in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. Yet, 60,000 parents in these counties are expected to participate in welfare-to-work programs in the coming year. While not all of these parents will use paid care, it is still clear that the demand for child care far outweighs the availability. It is expected the shortage will be the greatest for parents of infants.[61]
    - ⇒ A computer analysis by the *Ventura County Star* shows that there are not enough child care spaces in the areas of Ventura County where they are most needed to make welfare reform work. Oxnard, Port Hueneme, and communities in the Santa Clara Valley—all of which have high proportions of families participating in California's welfare-to-work program—have the least supply, with more poor children who will need care as their parents enter the work force than there are available spaces.[62]
    - ⇒ The supply of child care is insufficient in other areas where many families on welfare live. For example, the disparity between demand and availability is striking in the working-class communities of Bell, Bell Gardens and Cudahy, southeast of downtown Los Angeles. There are nearly 24,000 children younger than 10 living in this area, and 40 percent (9,600) live in households on welfare. Yet there are fewer than 500 licensed child care openings.[63]

- One-third of parents receiving aid in Ventura County, like many parents throughout California, do not speak English and will be looking for child care as they are pushed into the job market, according to a county official responsible for coordinating implementation of the new welfare system. As these parents try to move from welfare to work, they may have particular difficulties finding child care providers who speak their language and understand their culture.[64]

Some families on welfare face particular challenges finding child care

Salvador Luna is preoccupied with what to do with his two young sons. On welfare and under pressure to find a job, Luna has an additional worry: Alex, age seven, and Martin, age five, have hearing disabilities that few child care centers can accommodate. Luna, 44, has been looking for child care more than two years, since long before welfare reform became a reality. None of the centers he contacted were equipped to care for children with special needs like Alex or Martin. "When I talked to providers, they said it was impossible," he recalled. "As much as they want to, they can't because they have to care for the other kids." He signed up on a waiting list for a Huntington Park center, heard nothing for eight months and finally gave up. His father tries to help but cannot provide full-time care for the boys, nor can his sister, who is looking for a job of her own.

Luna is particularly interested in having his sons be cared for in a child care center, "I would rather have them in a center, because they would teach them more things," he said. "If they are in someone's home, they will probably only sit in front of the television." Yet when he applied again this November for child care at a nearby program, he was told he might have to wait six to eight months because there were about 100 families ahead of him on the waiting list. Luna's ability to work is complicated by the fact that the boys have to go to the doctor at least once (and sometimes several times) each month, appointments that complicate Luna's child care arrangements and his job hunt. He has held good jobs before, but says he understands the needs of his employers and why he would be let go. Luna was cast into the role of mother and father nearly six years ago when his wife became addicted to drugs.

Luna is about to start a computer training course at Bell Gardens High School and has talked to a neighborhood woman about baby-sitting. Because he is in a welfare-to-work program, he automatically qualifies for a subsidy to pay for the baby-sitter, but he has abandoned hope that he can find a licensed center for them. "I guess there are a lot of changes coming about, though I haven't seen them yet," Luna said. "But I sure hope they benefit not only the parents, but the children."[65]

Largely quoted from Carla Rivera, "Who will watch the kids"
Los Angeles Times, March 8, 1998

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in California

Number of children younger than one[66]	534,240
Number of children younger than six[67]	3,317,477
Number of children ages six to 17[68]	5,548,936
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[69]	240,400
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[70]	1,990,500
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[71]	56%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[72]	72%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in California

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[73]	3,307,170
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in California[74]	$2,731

Annual Child Care Costs in California[75]

Child Care Centers (1996-1997)

	Statewide		Alameda County		Fresno County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$7,020	$12,168	$6,864	$9,880	$6,552	$7,176
4 years	$4,888	$10,556	$6,032	$7,488	$5,044	$6,500
8 years[76]	$3,594	$7,188	$4,133	$6,529	$3,414	$4,493

Family Child Care Homes (1996-1997)

	Statewide		Alameda County		Fresno County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	n.a.	n.a.	$5,668	$10,400	$4,904	$7,800
4 years	n.a.	n.a.	$5,200	$7,800	$4,607	$7,800
8 years	n.a.	n.a.	$4,133	$7,188	$2,935	$6,589

Many Children in California Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does California require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[77]	Yes
Does California require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[78]	Yes
Average salary for a child care worker in California in 1996[79]	$14,940
Annual turnover rate for teachers in child care centers in 1996[80]	28-31%
Percentage of child care centers in California that were accredited as of 1997[81]	4%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in California[82]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[83]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	4	3-5	Yes
27 months	12	4-6	No
3 years	12	7-10	No
4 years	12	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in California

Number of licensed child care centers in 1998[84]	12,930
Number of licensed family child care homes in 1998[85]	36,520
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[86]	31%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, San Francisco, CA: collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[9] Nakao, "Torrid economy leaves kids behind, report says...," San Francisco, CA: *The San Francisco Examiner*, November 5, 1997, p. A-9.

[10] Information from California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, San Francisco, CA: collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[11] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[12] From Lifetime Television's on-line project "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment" which collects stories about child care from families around the country. It is found at www.lifetimetv.com.

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] General Accounting Office, *Welfare Reform: States' Efforts to Expand Child Care Programs,* GAO/HEHS-98-27 (Washington, DC: General Accounting Office, January 1998).

[15] Gurnon, "Chinatown, Mission kids; protests fly," San Francisco, CA: *The San Francisco Examiner*, January 24, 1998, p. A-3.

[16] Haddad, "Orange County Voices: It Is Time To Face Our Child Care Crisis," Los Angeles, CA: *Los Angeles Times*, December 14, 1997, Part B, p. 7.

[17] Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, *Valuing Families: The High Cost of Waiting for Child Care Sliding Fee Assistance* (Minneapolis, MN: 1995).

[18] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[19] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[20] Rivera, Carla, "Who will watch the kids," *Los Angeles Times,* March 8, 1998.

[21] Ryan, "The home that love will build—Father searches for a place for his family," San Francisco, CA: *The San Francisco Chronicle*, December 10, 1997, p. A21.

[22] Adams and Poersch. *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[23] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[24] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[25] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[26] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, MA.

[27] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools. (October 16, 1997).

[28] California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division.

[29] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[30] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[31] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver, CO: University of Colorado, 1995).

[32] In 1996, the annual turnover rate for teachers in for-profit programs was 31 percent and the turnover rate for teachers in non-profit programs was 28 percent. *California Child Care and Development Compensation Study: Towards Promising Policy and Practice*, prepared by the American Institutes for Research and the center for the Child Care Workforce for the California Department of Education, Sacramento, CA, as reported in *Current Data on Child Care Salaries and Benefits in the United States* (Washington, DC: CCCW, March 1998).

[33] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[34] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[35] DeFao, Janine, "Child care centers losing workers," *Sacramento Bee*, December 28, 1997.

[36] Schevitz, "Teacher Shortage Pulls Away Preschools' Staff," *The San Francisco Chronicle*, September 2, 1997, pp. A1 and A4.

[37] Information from the California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, San Francisco, CA, April 1998.

[38] DeFao, Janine, "Child care centers losing workers," *Sacramento Bee*, December 28, 1997.

[39] Enkoji, "Welfare Cuts Bring Big Day-Care Push," Sacramento, CA: *Sacramento Bee*, November 5, 1997, p. A1.

[40] From Lifetime Television's on-line project "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment" which collects stories about child care from families around the country. It is found at www.lifetimetv.com.

[41] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[42] Information from "California Report '97" by Children NOW. Reported in Nakao, "Torrid economy leaves kids behind, report says...," San Francisco, CA: *The San Francisco Examiner*, November 5, 1997, p. A-9.

[43] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[44] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[45] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[46] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[47] Clark and Long, "Child Care Prices: A Profile of Six Communities—Final Report" (Washington, DC: The Urban Institute, 1995), p. 72.

[48] Aurelio, Mary Lou, "Child Care," *City News Service*, Los Angeles, April 7, 1998.

[49] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[50] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[51] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, MA.

[52] Information from California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, San Francisco, CA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[53] California Child Care Resource & Referral Network, *California Child Care Portfolio*, (San Francisco, CA: California CCR&R, February 1997).

[54] Weldon, "Childcare Needs Exceed Availability," Chicago, IL: *Chicago Tribune*, December 21, 1997, p.3.

[55] Clark and Long, "Child Care Prices: A Profile of Six Communities—Final Report" (Washington, DC: The Urban Institute, 1995), p. 72.

[56] Cited in "Parents Get Uneven Access to California Preschools," *Report of Preschool Programs*, November 12, 1997, p. 182 (summary of "Unfair Head Start: California Families Face Gaps in Preschool and Child Care Availability," PACE, School of Education, University of California at Berkeley).

[57] California Child Care Resource & Referral Network, *California Child Care Portfolio*, (San Francisco, CA: California CCR&R, February 1997).

[58] Saillant and Claassen, "Who'll watch the children?" Ventura County, CA: *The Ventura County Star*, January 21, 1998, p. A01.

[59] Grad, "Poll Sheds Light on Welfare Issues...," Los Angeles, CA: *Los Angeles Times*, November 4, 1997, B-1.

[60] Clark and Long, "Child Care Prices: A Profile of Six Communities—Final Report" (Washington, DC: The Urban Institute, 1995), p. 72.

[61] Morgan, "Child care faces welfare crunch; Moms to join workforce," Riverside, CA: *The Press-Enterprise*, November 24, 1997.

[62] Saillant and Claassen, "Who'll watch the children?" Ventura County, CA: *The Ventura County Star*, January 21, 1998, p. A01.

[63] Rivera, Carla, "Who will watch the kids," *Los Angeles Times*, March 8, 1998.

[64] Saillant, "Latin American group helps child-care providers," Ventura County, CA: *The Ventura County Star*, January 21, 1998, p. A06.

[65] Rivera, Carla, "Who will watch the kids," *Los Angeles Times*, March 8, 1998.

[66] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[67] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[68] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[69] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[70] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[71] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[72] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[73] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994,*

and 1995. Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[74] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[75] Information from California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, San Francisco, CA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[76] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[77] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[78] There is, however, no requirement for any *early childhood* training prior to serving children. California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division.

[79] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[80] In 1996, the annual turnover rate for teachers in for-profit programs was 31 percent and the turnover rate for teachers in non-profit programs was 28 percent. *California Child Care and Development Compensation Study: Towards Promising Policy and Practice,* prepared by the American Institutes for Research and the center for the Child Care Workforce for the California Department of Education, Sacramento, CA, as reported in *Current Data on Child Care Salaries and Benefits in the United States* (Washington, DC: CCCW, March 1998).

[81] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division, May 1998.

[82] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, MA.

[83] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[84] Data from the California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division, May 1998.

[85] Data from the California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division, May 1998.

[86] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

COLORADO:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Colorado parents.

- Every day, about 195,800 children younger than six are in child care in Colorado if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Colorado work to help support their families. An estimated 63 percent of Colorado mothers with children younger than six, and 79 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Colorado and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Colorado.

Child care is costly for many families in Colorado.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Colorado in 1997 was $2,562 [6]—less than two-thirds the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center.
- Many families in Colorado earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Colorado with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 237,360 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below about $27,000 for a family of three or 200 percent of poverty).[7]
- In Colorado, child care for a four-year-old in a child care center cost $4,035 on average in 1997, with fees as high as $9,100. Child care is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. For example, the average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Denver was $4,576, with fees as high as $7,592, and the average annual cost in the state's southeastern rural counties (Baca, Prowers, Otero, Heurfano, Los Animas, Chaffee, and Custer counties) was $3,444, with fees as high as $4,095.[8] These expenses are for only one child—parents with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Colorado[9]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Denver		Southeastern Rural Counties[10]	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	n.a.	n.a.	$5,096	$8,476	$3,480	$4,142
4 years	$4,035	$9,100	$4,576	$7,592	$3,444	$4,095
8 years[11]	n.a.	n.a.	$4,193	$9,584	$3,977	$4,516

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Denver		Southeastern Rural Counties	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	n.a.	n.a.	$5,096	$9,100	$3,449	$4,116
4 years	$4,035	$9,100	$4,576	$9,100	$3,357	$4,063
8 years	n.a.	n.a.	$3,366	$5,990	$3,994	$5,477

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in Denver, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *45 percent* of their income for child care. Families in rural areas struggle as well—the same family living in a southeastern rural Colorado county would have to spend *32 percent* of their income for average-cost care in a center.

Many low-income working families in Colorado are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Colorado ranks in the bottom half of states as far as making low-income families eligible for child care assistance. The state only allows low-income working families earning less than $24,660 (for a family of three) to be eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $36,370. Furthermore, counties can set income cutoffs as low as $17,330—among the lowest cutoffs in the country.[12]

- Even with Colorado's low income cutoffs, the state is not confident that all eligible families know they can get child care assistance, or that it could serve all eligible families if they did know they could get child care help.[13]

- The situation is likely to get worse in coming years, as more families are required to move from welfare to work. In a recent survey, Colorado reported that, without additional funds, it is not confident that it will be able to meet the demand for child care assistance generated by the increase in welfare work requirements.[14] Low-income working families who are *not* on welfare may end up losing assistance as more families on welfare need help.

- Families in Colorado who receive child care assistance still face enormous difficulties due to high parent fees and low state payment rates that limit their ability to obtain good care for their children. For example:
  - ⇒ Colorado requires families at the poverty level (which means they earn only $13,330 a year for a family of three or only $1,111 a month) who receive help paying for care to pay 11 percent of their income—or $119 a month—in family copayments. This is much higher than recommended by experts, and is more than families at the same

income level would have to pay in most other states, including neighboring states such as Wyoming and Utah.[15]

⇒ Families who are fortunate enough to receive child care assistance often have limited options due to low state payment rates for care. Every Colorado child care resource and referral agency has identified specific communities in the regions they serve where the provider reimbursement rates are so low that providers refuse to accept children whose care is subsidized.[16]

- Colorado does not invest enough in helping families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 48 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Colorado spent 81 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[17]

Low-income Colorado parents struggle to become self-sufficient and to afford child care

Monica, a 25-year-old single mother in Elbert, is working to get off welfare by earning her college degree. As she notes, many Colorado mothers want to work but have a hard time paying for child care: "Colorado Springs does not pay above minimum wage to workers and these moms are expected to work a job, which most of them do want, but to also find quality child care for their children on the wages that they earn. I looked into getting a job while finishing my degree because I did not want to feel like a burden to the taxpayers, but then my social worker informed me that if I did find a job and made as much as $400 in a month I would only receive maybe $40 of my monthly check.... I was one of the lucky ones that has the drive to get my college diploma with or without help from anyone else. But, because I did the endless paperwork and the many interviews, my county does help me pay for my son's child care and I do consider myself lucky to have found a high quality facility to take care of him while I am trying to improve our future. But, I found it very disturbing when my friends and fellow college students can't continue their classes, or must scrape by to put their children into daycare that costs almost half their monthly take home pay..."[18]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Colorado are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Colorado affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[19] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[20] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[21]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Colorado.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Colorado's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Colorado—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Colorado's children from harm.
- Colorado is one of the many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, Colorado met recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for only *two* of the six age groups examined.[22] For instance, the state allowed a caregiver to care for as many as 12 four-year-olds without help, although early childhood experts recommend no more than eight to 10. This makes it difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.
- A study of Colorado child care centers found that only 6 percent provide a high enough quality of care to fully meet children's developmental needs—in other words, to meet children's health and safety needs, and to help them learn through interesting and fun activities.[23]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to get 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[24] Colorado is one of the 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior early childhood training.[25]
- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[26] In 1995, the average annual wage of child care workers in child care centers in Colorado was only $11,300 (only slightly above minimum wage). Providers' salaries have declined 25 percent since 1975 when adjusted for inflation.[27] In addition, child care workers tend to receive no benefits or paid leave, according to national studies.[28]
- Child care providers struggle to keep their doors open—in fact, the profit margin for Colorado centers is just 3 percent.[29]
- Low wages, inadequate benefits, and limited profits are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. In Colorado, the turnover rate for staff at child care centers is 41 percent.[30] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[31]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Colorado.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in Colorado. In 1997, only about 141 of Colorado's 2,387 licensed child care centers (or 6 percent) were accredited.[32]

What do Colorado preschoolers want their child care teacher to know?

A number of four- and five-year-old Colorado children were asked, "What do you need to know to be a teacher?" They responded that teachers need to know how to:

- *"Listen to a person's hurt."*
- *"Make sure all the children are safe."*
- *"Make sure children are doing what they are able to do."*
- *"Use good words like 'please,' 'thank you,' and 'what would make you feel better?'"*
- *"Make sure children are careful with their self and their body."*
- *"Teach children things they're ready for."*
- *"Make the classroom beautiful so children can learn."*[33]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Colorado face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Colorado school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Colorado families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 97,886 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Colorado live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[34]

- Colorado children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[35] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[36] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[37] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.

- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Colorado, only one out of four public schools (1,329 or 26 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[38]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Colorado.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[39] This means as many as 24,000 babies in Colorado are in child care if national patterns hold true.[40]

510

- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Colorado's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.

- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping babies grow, Colorado allows a single caregiver to care for five nine-month-old babies alone. In contrast, early childhood experts recommend no more than three or four children this age per adult.[41] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, diaper, play, and care for five active nine-month-old children alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency.

- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Colorado to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Denver in 1997 averaged $5,096, but could cost as much as $8,476.[42]

- Child care for infants is often difficult for parents in Colorado to find. For instance, a 1995 study of child care in selected cities across the U.S. found serious shortages of infant care in Boulder. Such shortages created serious hardships for many parents: staff in the city's child care resource and referral agency reported that young mothers needing child care for their infants had lost their jobs and gone on welfare because they were unable to find care.[43]

Families in Colorado face serious challenges finding care

A Colorado woman tells of her daughter who is a recent law school graduate and is feeling the effects of the child care availability crunch. "She has a three-year-old, whom she managed to deliver between semesters. Because she's been in school, she's had terrific, on-campus child care two-thirds of the time. The other third, those semesters and summers when on-campus wasn't available, was a nightmare. To this day, she'll say, 'Compared to the day-care dilemma—pregnancy, 2, 4 and 6 a.m. feedings before an exam followed by waitressing was nothing!'"[44]

Other families in Colorado face shortages of care as well—such as families where the children have special needs or where the parents have nontraditional work schedules.

- Appropriate child care for adolescent children with disabilities basically does not exist in Colorado, according to Colorado Resource and Referral Agencies, Inc. (CORRA). For example, between July 1996 and June 1997, this office received 48 requests for help in finding school-age care for youth (ages 12 to 18 years) with special needs. Yet specialists were rarely able to find age-appropriate, inclusive, "full-coverage" school-age care for these youth. "Therapeutic" day camp programs that provide some coverage for families have often been squeezed out of city parks and recreation budgets. The middle and high school programs that are offered during vacation and breaks are typically only available for four hours a day, twice a week, and after-school enrichment and sports generally require skill, aptitude or general interest.[45]
- Only a small proportion of child care providers in Colorado offer care during nonstandard hours. Only about one in eight offer evening care or overnight care, about one in 14 offer

care during vacations and holidays, and one in 20 programs offer weekend care. As a result, parents with a nontraditional work schedule—such as second- or third-shift—may have difficulty finding care.[46]

Care during nontraditional hours is scarce for Colorado families

Beth Pfalmer, who runs child care referrals for four counties through the Community College of Denver, says, "The greatest challenge we're facing today is the lack of nontraditional hours and flexible schedules." Pfalmer gets about 130 calls a month from parents needing care on nights or weekends or for rotating schedules. She knows of only three centers in Denver that stay open past 6:30 p.m. One parent affected by this limited supply is Sonja Fisher, 20, who quit a job with night hours because she could not find anyone to look after her five-month-old daughter. Now she has lined up a job with more regular hours at a shoe store, but she does not have a car and cannot start work until she finds day care within walking distance. Anna Jo Haynes, director of Mile High Child Care, says, "There's a lot of worry that kids will be left alone,...especially at night."[47]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Colorado

Number of children younger than one[48]	53,346
Number of children younger than six[49]	326,363
Number of children ages six to 17[50]	671,575
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[51]	24,000
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[52]	195,800
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[53]	63%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[54]	79%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Colorado

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[55]	237,360
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Colorado[56]	$2,562

Annual Child Care Costs in Colorado[57]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Denver		Southeastern Rural Counties[58]	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	n.a.	n.a.	$5,096	$8,476	$3,480	$4,142
4 years	$4,035	$9,100	$4,576	$7,592	$3,444	$4,095
8 years[59]	n.a.	n.a.	$4,193	$9,584	$3,977	$4,516

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Denver		Southeastern Rural Counties	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	n.a.	n.a.	$5,096	$9,100	$3,449	$4,116
4 years	$4,035	$9,100	$4,576	$9,100	$3,357	$4,063
8 years	n.a.	n.a.	$3,366	$5,990	$3,994	$5,477

Many Children in Colorado Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Colorado require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[60]	No
Does Colorado require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[61]	Yes
Average salary for a child care worker in Colorado in 1995[62]	$11,300
Annual turnover rate for teachers in child care centers in Colorado[63]	41%
Percentage of child care centers in Colorado that were accredited as of 1997[64]	6%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Colorado[65]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[66]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	5	3-4	No
18 months	5	3-5	Yes
27 months	7	4-6	No
3 years	10	7-10	Yes
4 years	12	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in Colorado

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[67]	2,387
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[68]	57
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[69]	6,230
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[70]	26%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from Colorado Office of Resource and Referral (CORRA), Englewood, CO; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[9] Information from CORRA, Englewood, CO; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[10] Costs for Baca, Prowers, Otero, Heurfano, Las Animas, Chaffee and Custer counties.

[11] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[15] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[16] Information from Colorado Office of Resource and Referral (CORRA), Englewood, CO; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[17] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[18] From Lifetime Television's online project "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment" which collects stories about child care from families around the country. It is found at www.lifetimetv.com.

[19] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[20] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[21] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[22] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[23] The Colorado Office of Resource and Referral Agencies, Inc. (CORRA), *Finding the Balance, A Child Care Data Report* (Englewood, CO: CORRA, 1997), p. 3.

[24] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools (October 16, 1997).

[25] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[26] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[27] The Colorado Office of Resource and Referral Agencies, Inc. (CORRA), *Finding the Balance, A Child Care Data Report* (Englewood, CO: CORRA, 1997), p. 5. Annual wage calculated from hourly wage by CDF using assumption that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[28] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[29] The Colorado Office of Resource and Referral Agencies, Inc. (CORRA), *Finding the Balance, A Child Care Data Report* (Englewood, CO: CORRA, 1997), p. 5.

[30] Data on turnover rates for center staff from Colorado Office of Resource and Referral Agencies (CORRA), *Finding the Balance, A Child Care Data Report* (Englewood, CO: CORRA, 1997), p. 5.

[31] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[32] Data on number of accredited programs from the Colorado Association for the Education of Young Children. Data on the number of licensed centers from the Colorado Division of Child Care, reported by the Colorado Resource and Referral Agencies to a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[33] The Colorado Office of Resource and Referral Agencies, Inc. (CORRA) *Finding the Balance, A Child Care Data Report* (Englewood, CO: CORRA, 1997), p. 6.

[34] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[35] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[36] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[37] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[38] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[39] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[40] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[41] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[42] Information from Colorado Office of Resource and Referral (CORRA), Englewood, CO; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[43] Clark and Long, *Child Care Prices: A Profile of Six Communities—Final Report* (Washington, DC: The Urban Institute, 1995), p. 72.

[44] Flynn, "Origins of the orgy of domesticity," Denver, CO: *The Denver Post*, December 13, 1997, p. F-03.

[45] Information from Colorado Office of Resource and Referral (CORRA), Englewood, CO; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[46] The Colorado Office of Resource and Referral Agencies, Inc. (CORRA) *Finding the Balance, A Child Care Data Report* (Englewood, CO: CORRA, 1997), p. 4.

[47] Crowder, "The Next Generation, Welfare Reform contributes to, tries to relieve Child-Care Crunch," Denver, CO: *The Rocky Mountain News*, March 15, 1998, p. 4A.

[48] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[49] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[50] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[51] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[52] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[53] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[54] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[55] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[56] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[57] Information from CORRA, Englewood, CO; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[58] Costs for Baca, Prowers, Otero, Heurfano, Las Animas, Chaffee and Custer counties.

[59] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[60] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing.* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[61] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing.* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[62] The Colorado Office of Resource and Referral Agencies, Inc. (CORRA), *Finding the Balance, A Child Care Data Report* (Englewood, CO: CORRA, 1997), p. 5. Annual wage calculated from hourly wage by CDF using assumption that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[63] Data on turnover rates for center staff from Colorado Office of Resource and Referral Agencies, Inc. (CORRA), *Finding the Balance, A Child Care Data Report* (Englewood, CO: CORRA, 1997), p. 5.

[64] Data on number of accredited programs from the Colorado Association for the Education of Young Children. Data on the number of licensed centers from the Colorado Division of Child Care, reported by the Colorado Resource and Referral Agencies to a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[65] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[66] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[67] Including 1,694 licensed centers and preschools, and 693 licensed school-age programs. Data on the number of licensed centers from the Colorado Division of Child Care, reported by the Colorado Resource and Referral Agencies to a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, April 1998.

[68] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[69] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[70] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

HAWAII:

CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Hawaii parents.

- Every day, about 66,200 children younger than six are in child care in Hawaii if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Hawaii work to help support their families. An estimated 63 percent of Hawaii mothers with children younger than six, and 82 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Hawaii and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Hawaii.

Child care is costly for many families in Hawaii.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Hawaii in 1997 was $2,298[6]—less than *half* the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center.
- Many families in Hawaii earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Hawaii with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 71,760 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below about 200 percent of poverty).[7]
- In Hawaii, child care for a four-year-old in a child care center cost $4,744 on average in 1997. Child care is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. The average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Honolulu was $6,188, with fees as high as $7,020, and the average annual cost in Waianae was $4,083, with fees as high as $4,188.[8] These expenses are for only one child—parents with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Hawaii[9]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Honolulu		Waianae	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$6,500	$11,700	$7,270	$11,700	n.a.	n.a.
4 years	$4,744	$7,020	$6,188	$7,020	$4,083	$4,188
8 years[10]	$55/mo*	$55/mo*	$55/mo*	$55/mo*	$55/mo*	$55/mo*

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Honolulu		Waianae	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,913	$7,800	$5,224	$7,800	$4,652	$5,384
4 years	$4,836	$7,800	$5,212	$7,800	$4,704	$5,384
8 years	$2,875	$3,594	n.a.	n.a.	$3,594	$3,594

*Hawaii's Department of Education funds the "A+ After-School Program" in every school in Hawaii—the cost to the parent is reflected here.

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in Hawaii, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *53 percent* of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in Hawaii are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- In Hawaii, as of January 1997, there were an estimated 60,000 children ages five and younger in need of child care assistance, yet the state only served 6,418 children, according to a December 1997 report. The state reports that some eligible families in the state may not even know they could receive help paying for child care.[11]
- The situation is likely to get worse in coming years, as more families are required to move from welfare to work. In a recent survey, Hawaii reported that, without additional funds, it is not confident that it will be able to meet the demand for child care assistance generated by the increase in welfare work requirements.[12] Low-income working families who are *not* on welfare may end up losing assistance as more families on welfare need help.
- Hawaii does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 75 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Hawaii spent 26 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[13]

Even those parents in Hawaii fortunate enough to receive child care assistance often face limited options due to inadequate state policies.

- Families in Hawaii who receive child care assistance still face difficulties finding providers who will take care of their children, as the amount the state will pay for care is below market prices. As a consequence, providers either have to ask parents to make up the difference between the amount the state will pay and the amount the providers charge (in addition to the parent fees required by the state), or refuse to take care of children receiving help from the state. In contrast, states such as Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Montana, Nevada and Virginia paid at levels that would allow families receiving child care subsidies a broader range of choices than in Hawaii.[14]

- Hawaii families receiving child care assistance face limited choices, as there are providers—both centers and family child care—who are unwilling to serve children receiving subsidies because of the low state payment rates. PATCH (People Attentive to Children), a child care resource and referral agency in Honolulu which helps families find child care, also reports that some providers are reluctant to offer care because the state does not pay providers directly, making it difficult for providers to receive the timely reimbursement they need to stay in business.[15]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Hawaii are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Hawaii affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[16] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[17] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[18]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Hawaii.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Hawaii's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Hawaii—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Hawaii's children from harm.
- Hawaii is one of the many states that do not adequately protect their children. The state met recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for only *one* of the five age groups examined.[19] For instance, the state allowed a caregiver in a center to care for as many as 12 three-year-olds or 16 four-year-olds alone, although early childhood experts recommend no more than seven to 10. This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.
- There is concern that the Hawaii Department of Human Services, which is responsible for child care licensing, has downsized considerably and almost all licensing units are understaffed. Furthermore, all licensing workers in the state administer child care subsidy programs in addition to their licensing responsibilities. The subsidy responsibilities are particularly intense during the first two weeks of each month—as a result, the licensing workers are unable to process licensing applications or renewals during this time. This situation creates a serious backlog. Yet these workers are still responsible for investigating complaints promptly, regardless of their subsidy workload.[20]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to get 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[21] Hawaii is one of the 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[22] [They must, however, be certified in first aid before they can become licensed.[23]]
- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100).[24] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Hawaii was only $15,380, which was less than the average wages of stock clerks or bartenders in the state.[25]
- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in Hawaii, with about one of five (19 percent) family child care providers going out of business each year. This percentage is as high as two out of five (43 percent) family child care providers in Waianae and an astonishing 84 percent in Honolulu.[26] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[27]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Hawaii.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in Hawaii. In 1997, only about 35 of Hawaii's 519 child care centers (or 7 percent) were accredited.[28] According to PATCH, a child care resource and referral agency, only 11 of the 84 licensed centers in Honolulu were accredited.[29]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Hawaii face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with children younger than three.

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Hawaii.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[30] This means as many as 7,900 babies in Hawaii are in child care if national patterns hold true.[31]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Hawaii's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping babies and toddlers grow, Hawaii allows a single caregiver to care for six 18-month-old toddlers. In contrast, early childhood experts recommend no more than three to five

toddlers this age per adult. It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, diaper, play, and care for six active 18-month-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency.[32]

- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Hawaii to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. In 1997, child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Hawaii averaged $6,500, but could cost as much as $11,700.[33]
- Families in Hawaii can find it difficult to locate infant care. For instance, in 1997, the Honolulu resource and referral agency (PATCH) received 2,622 calls statewide from parents looking for child care for their infants and toddlers up to 18 months old. However, the agency's database lists only 1,062 slots for children this age.[34]

Other families in Hawaii face shortages of care as well—such as families moving from welfare to work.

- It is not clear that there will be available spaces for the families needing child care in order to move off welfare. PATCH, the Honolulu resource and referral agency, reports that the 15,000 parents who are estimated to need jobs under welfare reform will significantly exceed the state's child care capacity.[35]

While the scarcity of good after-school options leaves many school-age children across the country home alone and at risk of harm, Hawaii's investment in after-school programs helps to keep children safe and engaged in constructive activities.

- Many Hawaii families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 26,794 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Hawaii live in families with incomes below the poverty line.[36] [In Hawaii, the poverty line for a family of three was about $15,330 in 1997—due to the higher cost of living, Hawaii's poverty line is higher than for other states.]
- Investments in before- and after-school care are critical in keeping Hawaii's school-age children safe. Nationwide, nearly five million children are home alone after school each week,[37] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[38] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[39] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities across the U.S. However, Hawaii's investment in the A+ program has helped expand the after-school opportunities available to school-age children in the state. For example, three out of four of Hawaii's public schools (234 or 75 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994—which is significantly higher than most other states.[40]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Hawaii

Number of children younger than one[41]	17,631
Number of children younger than six[42]	110,279
Number of children ages six to 17[43]	196,244
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[44]	7,900
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[45]	66,200
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[46]	63%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[47]	82%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Hawaii

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (<$27,000 for a family of three)[48]	71,760
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Hawaii[49]	$2,298

Annual Child Care Costs in Hawaii[50]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Honolulu		Waianae	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$6,500	$11,700	$7,270	$11,700	n.a.	n.a.
4 years	$4,744	$7,020	$6,188	$7,020	$4,083	$4,188
8 years[51]	$55/mo*	$55/mo*	$55/mo*	$55/mo*	$55/mo*	$55/mo*

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Honolulu		Waianae	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,913	$7,800	$5,224	$7,800	$4,652	$5,384
4 years	$4,836	$7,800	$5,212	$7,800	$4,704	$5,384
8 years	$2,875	$3,594	n.a.	n.a.	$3,594	$3,594

**HI's Department of Education funds the "A+ After-School Program" in every school—the cost to the parent reflected here.*

Many Children in Hawaii Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Hawaii require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[52]	Yes
Does Hawaii require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[53]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in Hawaii in 1996[54]	$15,380
Annual turnover rate for family child care providers in Hawaii[55]	19%
Percentage of child care centers in Hawaii that were accredited as of 1997[56]	7%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Hawaii[57]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[58]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	6	3-5	No
27 months	8	4-6	No
3 years	12	7-10	No
4 years	16	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in Hawaii

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[59]	519
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[60]	4
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[61]	485
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[62]	75%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from PATCH, People Attentive to Children, Honolulu, HI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[9] Information from PATCH, People Attentive to Children, Honolulu, HI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[10] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[11] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[14] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[15] Information from PATCH, People Attentive to Children, Honolulu, HI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[16] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[17] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[18] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[19] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[20] Information from PATCH, People Attentive to Children, Honolulu, HI, collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[21] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools (October 16, 1997).

[22] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[23] Information from PATCH, People Attentive to Children, Honolulu, HI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[24] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[25] Data on wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[26] Information from PATCH, People Attentive to Children, Honolulu, HI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[27] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[28] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm. The number of programs in the state come from the Children's Foundation in Washington, DC.

[29] Information from PATCH, People Attentive to Children, Honolulu, HI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[30] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[31] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[32] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[33] Information from PATCH, People Attentive to Children, Honolulu, HI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[34] Information from PATCH, People Attentive to Children, Honolulu, HI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[35] The estimate of 15,000 families on welfare needing to find work was originally reported by the Honolulu Advertiser. Information from PATCH, People Attentive to Children, Honolulu, HI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[36] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[37] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[38] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[39] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[40] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[41] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[42] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[43] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[44] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[45] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[46] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[47] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[48] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[49] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[50] Information from PATCH, People Attentive to Children, Honolulu, HI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[51] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[52] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing.* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[53] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing.* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[54] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[55] Information from PATCH, People Attentive to Children, Honolulu, HI; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[56] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[57] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[58] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[59] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[60] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[61] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[62] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

IDAHO:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Idaho parents.

- Every day, about 65,100 children younger than six are in child care in Idaho if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Idaho work to help support their families. An estimated 60 percent of Idaho mothers with children younger than six, and 77 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2] This number has been growing over time—the proportion of women in the labor force has increased by 78 percent between 1960 and 1990 in Idaho.[3]
- The Idaho Department of Labor estimated that, in 1996, about 135,800 children under 13 may have needed some form of child care while their parents worked. This number will increase in coming years, as nearly 10,000 Idaho children in families who are on welfare may need child care as their parents move into the workforce.[4]
- For many mothers in Idaho and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[5] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[6] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[7]
- In *Working Mother* magazine's 1997 report on child care in each state, Idaho ranked (with Mississippi and Louisiana) at the bottom of the list. Idaho received the lowest ranking in all the four categories examined: quality, safety, state commitment to child care, and child care availability.[8]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Idaho.

Child care is costly for many families in Idaho.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Idaho in 1997 was $1,973[9]—less than *half* the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a child care center in Boise City/Ada County.

- Many families in Idaho earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need.
  - ⇒ Families in Idaho with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year.
  - ⇒ There are about 119,370 children younger than 13 in Idaho who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[10]
  - ⇒ Lower- and middle-income families in Idaho are not seeing increases in their wages. Between 1989 and 1994, the real wages of family workers in the middle of the wage scale in Idaho rose by only 0.1 percent, while the real wages of workers in the bottom fifth of the wage scale rose by just 2.6 percent.[11]
  - ⇒ Many poor families in Idaho have at least one parent in the workforce—data from 1989 to 1994 show that 85 percent of Idaho families below the poverty level ($13,330 for a family of three) had at least one parent in the workforce. Forty percent of these working poor families were headed by a female.[12]

- In Idaho, child care for an infant or preschooler can easily cost an average of $3,000 to $5,000 a year. It is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. In 1997, the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Boise City/Ada County was $4,354, with fees as high as $6,305; and the average cost in the state's rural counties was $3,024, with fees as high as $6,906.[13] These expenses are for only one child—parents with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Idaho[14]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Boise City/Ada County		Rural Counties	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,896	$6,552	$3,287	$7,019
4 years	$4,354	$6,305	$3,024	$6,906
8 years[15]	$4,205	$5,391	n.a.	n.a.

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Boise City/Ada County		Rural Counties	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,218	$5,720	$3,233	$6,750
4 years	$4,064	$5,720	$3,002	$4,500
8 years	$2,648	$3,594	n.a.	n.a.

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in Boise City/Ada County, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) spend *43 percent* of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in Idaho are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Idaho ranks in the bottom third of states as far as making low-income families eligible for child care assistance. As of January 1998, 35 states allowed families with higher incomes to receive state subsidies. The state allows only low-income working families with incomes below $20,004 (for a family of three) to be eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $30,089. This cutoff is lower than in a number of nearby states, including Nevada, Washington, and Montana.[16]

- Even with Idaho's low income cutoffs, the state indicated in a recent survey that it is not confident that all eligible families know they can get child care assistance, or that it could serve all eligible families if they did know they could get child care help.[17] A recent survey of low-income adults across Idaho found that only one out of every five low-income adults who used child care had received any help from the state in paying for their child care expenses.[18]
- The Idaho Division of Welfare has estimated that 9,648 children under the age of 13 have parents on welfare (Temporary Assistance for Families in Idaho or TAFI). Nearly half of these children were infants, toddlers, or preschoolers. Many of these children will need child care subsidies as their parents move into the labor force.[19]
- Despite the enormous need for additional investments in child care in Idaho, the state was one of the very few that failed to utilize its full allocation of federal child care funds in the last two years. As a result, the state lost over $3 million in federal funds for Fiscal Year (FY) 1997 that would have gone to help hard-working low-income Idaho families get affordable quality care for their children. Between FY 1995 and FY 1997, the expenditures for child care subsidies for low-income families *declined* by 39 percent in Idaho.[20]
- Idaho does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only *14 cents* out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994, and ranked 48th out of all states in their financial commitment to these essential supports. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Idaho spent 184 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[21]

Child care subsidies can make a difference for those parents lucky enough to get help....

Thanks to the Idaho Child Care Program (the state child care assistance program), Dawn Nicholson, a 31-year-old bookkeeper, can afford to enroll her five-year-old son at the YMCA for after-school care. Her bill was $196 for about two weeks of after-school care, and the Child Care Program paid $124 of it, she said. "This is the best day-care I've ever found, and I've moved around a lot with my work," reports Nicholson, who plans to go to law school.[22]

...but many parents are left to struggle with child care costs on their own

A single Idaho parent with a six-year-old and a one-year-old and a total income of $24,000 (including child support), does not qualify for any state help. She is looking for a small family child care home (which cares for five children or fewer) for her one-year-old, but cannot afford most of them. The fees range from $75 to $100 a week for one child. She is living in the cheapest apartment she can find, but still has difficulty managing her rent and car payment. "I have more money going out then coming in," she says.[23]

Many of those Idaho families fortunate enough to receive child care assistance still face financial hardships or limited options due to inadequate state policies.

- Families receiving child care assistance in Idaho continue to shoulder a huge financial burden, as the state has some of the highest family copayment levels in the country. As of January 1998, a family of three earning only $19,995 a year (or only $1,670 a month) and receiving child care help could still be required to pay as much as 12 percent of their income—or $192 a month—in family copayments. This is higher than recommended by experts, and is more than families at the same income level would have to pay in many other states.[24]
- Families in Idaho who receive child care assistance face difficulties finding providers who will take care of their children as the amount the state will pay for care is below market prices.[25] Idaho Kids Count reports that the state's low rates have caused some child care providers to refuse to accept children who receive child care assistance. Parents wishing to use these providers must pay the difference between what their provider charges and the amount the state is willing to pay—*in addition* to their already high copayment.[26]

Although child care has become a fact of life for many working families in Idaho, child care assistance is only provided by a minority of employers in the state.

- According to a 1996 survey of Idaho employers conducted by the Idaho Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Bureau, child care benefits were offered by only about one out of three (37 percent) large employers with over 100 employees, less than one out of ten (8 percent) medium employers with between 20 and 99 employees, and by a very small fraction (under 2 percent) of small employers with between one and 19 employees.[27]
- Idaho employers were somewhat more likely to offer family-friendly policies such as flexible work schedules, but such policies were still relatively uncommon. These benefits were offered by just two out of five (41 percent) large employers, one out of five (22 percent) medium employers, and one out of ten (11 percent) small employers.[28]

Parents' demand for child care with convenient location and flexible hours outstrips supply

Some Idaho employers are beginning to invest in child care, seeing it as a way to make working parents more productive. A few provide on-site child care for their employees' children. Employees of St. Luke's Regional Medical Center can take their children to Little Luke's, which is open 6 a.m. to midnight every day, even weekends and holidays. The cost ranges from $2.10 an hour to $3.15 depending on the age of the child, and the number of hours. About 125 children are enrolled. Eighty more infants and toddlers are on a waiting list.[29]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Idaho are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Idaho affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[30] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[31] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[32]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Idaho—leaving many children vulnerable to harm.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Idaho's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Idaho—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Idaho's children from harm.
- Idaho is not adequately protecting its children in child care. The state's licensing system is weak on all fronts—by allowing significant numbers of providers to be exempt from having to be licensed, by not setting adequate standards to protect children for those providers that *do* have to be licensed, and by failing to enforce the minimal requirements that are in place.
- The vast majority of child care programs in Idaho are not required to be fully licensed, meaning that programs are allowed to take care of children without having to meet basic health and safety protections. Specifically:
  - ⇒ A 1997 study found that only one out of four (24 percent) of the 1,344 child care facilities listed in the database of Idaho's child care resource and referral (CCR&R) agencies are required by the state to be fully licensed.[33]
  - ⇒ Family child care is a common form of child care in Idaho—such providers make up almost half (44 percent) of the providers registered with Idaho's resource and referral agencies.[34] Yet the state allows such providers to care for as many as six children in their homes without having to meet *any* state licensing health and safety protections.* This means, for example, that a provider with a history of child abuse could legally care for five or six children in his/her home, and that a program could legally operate with safety hazards such as uncovered electrical outlets or poisonous substances that are not locked away. *[Note that some of these providers may be required to meet city regulations, or to meet certain protections if they receive public funds.]
  - ⇒ Group homes, which care for more than six children in the home of the provider, are only required to follow fire and criminal check regulations, but no other health and safety protections. This type of care comprises 32 percent of the programs listed by the resource and referral agencies.[35]

533

- Even those facilities that are licensed face minimal requirements.
  - ⇒ CPR and first aid training is *optional* for staff in certified or licensed day care centers in Idaho, although centers do get a break on their licensing fees if workers have it.[36] This means that child care workers in licensed programs can take care of children without any training in how to handle emergencies or injuries.
  - ⇒ In 1997, Idaho did not meet recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for *any* of the six age groups examined.[37] The state allowed a caregiver in a center to care for as many as 12 three- or four-year-olds alone, although early childhood experts recommend no more than seven to 10. This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.
- Those few requirements that Idaho does have are inadequately enforced, allowing children to be cared for in settings that are not following the law.
  - ⇒ Licensing regulations for child care providers are often not enforced, with virtually no punishment for rule-breakers, according to the Idaho edition of the *Spokesman-Review*. A lone state inspector tracks all 108 of the Panhandle's registered child care providers, but has limited powers to see to it that they adhere to existing health and safety standards. New employees at established centers frequently start work without required FBI checks. Many day care owners who are required to obtain a license do not get one.[38]
  - ⇒ Local health departments inspect state-certified or licensed centers only once every other year for health and safety measures,[39] and the state only performs surprise checks after receiving a complaint.[40] Yet, evidence demonstrates that periodic inspections by licensing staff are one of the most important ways to ensure the safety and well-being of children in licensed child care programs, as the inspections allow licensers to detect unsafe situations such as safety risks, unsanitary practices, and too many children for the provider to supervise adequately.

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[41] Idaho is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[42] Idaho is also one of 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior training.[43] Once child care workers in Idaho begin providing care, they must only receive four hours of training per year.[44]
- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[45] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Idaho was only $13,080.[46] National studies of child care providers find that they also tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[47]
- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in Idaho. For example, three out of ten (31 percent) family child care providers go out of business in Boise City/Ada County

each year.[48] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[49]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Idaho.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in Idaho. In 1997, only about 13 of Idaho's 462 licensed child care centers (or 3 percent) were accredited.[50]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Idaho face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

- The state of Idaho is one of the few that does not fund community child care referral agencies to assist parents in finding care, provide consumer education, and help improve the quality of care.[51] As a result, many parents are unable to get help in their search for quality child care.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Idaho school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Idaho families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 30,899 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Idaho live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[52]
- Idaho children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[53] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[54] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[55] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Idaho, for example, only about one out of every eight public schools (573 or 12 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[56]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Idaho.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[57] This means as many as 8,000 babies in Idaho are in child care if national patterns hold true.[58]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years

lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Idaho's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.

- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, while a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping babies grow, Idaho allows a single caregiver to care for six nine-month-old babies. In contrast, early childhood experts recommend no more than three to four babies this age per adult, and in many western states (Montana, Oregon, Utah, Washington) the standard ratio for adult caregiver to infants is one to four.[59] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, diaper, play, and care for *six* active nine-month-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency.
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Idaho to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. For example, child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Boise City and Ada County in 1997 averaged $4,896, but could cost as much as $6,552.[60]

Other families in Idaho face shortages of care as well—such as families where the parents don't work the traditional "9-to-5" hours.

- Families needing child care during nontraditional hours face particular problems finding care for their children, as relatively few Idaho child care providers provide care for families that do not have typical work schedules. Of the 1,344 child care facilities in listed in the Idaho child care resource and referral database, only 3 percent offered 24-hour care; 7 percent offered extended hour care; 6 percent offered overnight care; and 9 percent offered evening care.[61]
- Nontraditional-hour care is particularly scarce in rural counties. Local experts report that the majority of Idaho's rural counties have no care available during nontraditional hours.[62]

Parents working nontraditional options lack child care options

In the fall of 1993, the Child Care Resource and Referral Agency, housed in the Western Idaho Community Action Agency (WICAP), received reports from several sources that workers at a round-the-clock food processing plant were using their cars as "child care" as a last resort. Young children were left asleep and unattended in cars in the plant's parking lot.[63]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Idaho

Number of children younger than one[64]	17,756
Number of children younger than six[65]	108,568
Number of children ages six to 17[66]	239,941
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[67]	8,000
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[68]	65,100
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[69]	60%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[70]	77%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Idaho

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[71]	119,370
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Idaho[72]	$1,973

Annual Child Care Costs in Idaho[73]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Boise City/Ada County		Rural counties	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,896	$6,552	$3,287	$7,019
4 years	$4,354	$6,305	$3,024	$6,906
8 years[74]	$4,205	$5,391	n.a.	n.a.

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Boise City/Ada County		Rural counties	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,218	$5,720	$3,233	$6,750
4 years	$4,064	$5,720	$3,002	$4,500
8 years	$2,648	$3,594	n.a.	n.a.

Many Children in Idaho Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Idaho require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[75]	No
Does Idaho require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[76]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in Idaho in 1996[77]	$13,080
Annual turnover rate for family child care providers in Boise City/Ada County, Idaho[78]	31%
Percentage of child care centers in Idaho that were accredited as of 1997[79]	3%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Idaho[80]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[81]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	6	3-4	No
18 months	6	3-5	No
27 months	12	4-6	No
3 years	12	7-10	No
4 years	12	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in Idaho

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[82]	462
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[83]	814
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[84]	512
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[85]	12%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Burke and Stroebel, *Idaho Works if Child Care Works* (draft), (Boise, ID: Idaho KIDS COUNT, November 1997), executive summary.

[4] Information from Child Care Connections, Boise, ID; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[5] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[6] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[7] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[8] Holcomb, et al., "Fifth Annual Survey: Child Care, How Does Your State Rate?," *Working Mother*, July/August 1997.

[9] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[10] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995*. Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[11] Burke and Stroebel, *Idaho Works if Child Care Works* (draft), (Boise, ID: Idaho KIDS COUNT, November 1997), p. 4.

[12] Data collected from 1989-1994. Burke and Stroebel, *Idaho Works if Child Care Works* (draft), (Boise, ID: Idaho KIDS COUNT, November 1997), p. 4.

[13] Information on costs in Boise City/Ada County from Child Care Connections, Boise, ID; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997. Information on costs in rural counties from Sharon Burke and Helen Stroebel, *Idaho Works if Child Care Works* (draft), (Boise, ID: Idaho KIDS COUNT, November 1997), Table 5-1.

[14] Information on costs in Boise City/Ada County from Child Care Connections, Boise, ID; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997. Information on costs in rural counties from Sharon Burke and Helen Stroebel, *Idaho Works if Child Care Works* (draft), (Boise, ID: Idaho KIDS COUNT, November 1997), Table 5-1.

[15] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[16] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[17] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[18] The survey was of 223 low-income adults, and was conducted by United Vision for Idaho in May and June of 1997. Cited in Anooshian, Brown, et al. "Studies Converge on Warning Signs for Low Income Families in Idaho" *Early Warnings, Vol.1, No. 1*, (Boise, ID: November 1997).

[19] Based on TAFI enrollment data for May 1997. Burke and Stroebel, *Idaho Works if Child Care Works* (draft), (Boise, ID: Idaho KIDS COUNT, November 1997), p. 6.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

[20] Burke and Stroebel, *Idaho Works if Child Care Works* (draft), (Boise, ID: Idaho KIDS COUNT, November 1997), executive summary.

[21] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[22] LaMay, "Idaho loses $3 million earmarked for day-care," Boise, ID: *Idaho Statesman*, October 1, 1997.

[23] Information from Child Care Connections, Boise, ID; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[24] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[25] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[26] Burke and Stroebel, *Idaho Works if Child Care Works* (draft), (Boise, ID: Idaho KIDS COUNT, November 1997), pp. 13-14.

[27] Burke and Stroebel, *Idaho Works if Child Care Works* (draft), (Boise, ID: Idaho KIDS COUNT, November 1997), p. 16.

[28] Burke and Stroebel, *Idaho Works if Child Care Works* (draft), (Boise, ID: Idaho KIDS COUNT, November 1997), p. 16.

[29] LaMay, "Parents must search for quality day-care," Boise, ID: *The Idaho Statesman*, September 30, 1997, p. 1B.

[30] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[31] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[32] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[33] Burke and Stroebel, *Idaho Works if Child Care Works* (draft), (Boise, ID: Idaho KIDS COUNT, November 1997), p. 19.

[34] Burke and Stroebel, *Idaho Works if Child Care Works* (draft), (Boise, ID: Idaho KIDS COUNT, November 1997), p. 19.

[35] Burke and Stroebel, *Idaho Works if Child Care Works* (draft), (Boise, ID: Idaho KIDS COUNT, November 1997), p. 19.

[36] LaMay, "Parents must search for quality day-care," Boise, ID: *The Idaho Statesman*, September 30, 1997, p. 1B.

[37] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts and from Child Care Connections, Boise, ID.

[38] Welch, "Roulette in Idaho; centers are booming, but state ranked near bottom in supervision" Spokane, WA: *The Spokesman-Review*, September 14, 1997, Idaho Edition, p. A1.

[39] LaMay, "Parents must search for quality day-care" Boise, ID: *The Idaho Statesman*, September 30, 1997, p. 1B.

[40] Welch, "Roulette in Idaho; centers are booming, but state ranked near bottom in supervision" Spokane, WA: *The Spokesman-Review*, September 14, 1997, Idaho Edition, p. A1.

[41] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools. (October 16, 1997).

[42] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[43] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[44] Welch, "Roulette in Idaho; centers are booming, but state ranked near bottom in supervision" Spokane, WA: *The Spokesman-Review*, September 14, 1997, Idaho Edition, p. A1.

[45] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[46] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[47] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[48] Information from Child Care Connections, Boise, ID; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[49] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[50] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[51] Information from Child Care Connections, Boise, ID; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[52] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[53] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[54] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[55] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[56] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[57] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[58] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[59] Trillhaase, "Dead last where it counts," Idaho Falls, ID: *Idaho Falls Post Register*, August 19, 1997, p. A9.

[60] Information on costs in Boise City/Ada County from Child Care Connections, Boise, ID; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997. Information on costs in rural counties from Sharon Burke and Helen Stroebel, *Idaho Works if Child Care Works* (draft), (Boise, ID: Idaho KIDS COUNT, November 1997), Table 5-1.

[61] Burke and Stroebel, *Idaho Works if Child Care Works* (draft), (Boise, ID: Idaho KIDS COUNT, November 1997), p. 9.

[62] Burke and Stroebel, *Idaho Works if Child Care Works* (draft), (Boise, ID: Idaho KIDS COUNT, November 1997), p. 9.

[63] Burke and Stroebel, *Idaho Works if Child Care Works* (draft), (Boise, ID: Idaho KIDS COUNT, November 1997), p. 9.

[64] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[65] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[66] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[67] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[68] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[69] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[70] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[71] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of*

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State. Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995. Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[72] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[73] Information on costs in Boise City/Ada County from Child Care Connections, Boise, ID; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997. Information on costs in rural counties from Sharon Burke and Helen Stroebel, *Idaho Works if Child Care Works* (draft), (Boise, ID: Idaho KIDS COUNT, November 1997), Table 5-1.

[74] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[75] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[76] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[77] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[78] Information from Child Care Connections, Boise, ID; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[79] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[80] Data on ratios for children ages 27 months and older from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts. Data on ratios for 9- and 18-month-olds from Child Care Connections, Boise, ID.

[81] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[82] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[83] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[84] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[85] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

MONTANA:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Montana parents.

- Every day, about 40,600 children younger than six are in child care in Montana if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.

- Most mothers in Montana work to help support their families. An estimated 62 percent of Montana mothers with children younger than six, and 77 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]

- For many mothers in Montana and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Montana.

Child care is costly for many families in Montana.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. For example, the average annual cost of public college tuition in Montana in 1997 was $2,488[6]—about two-thirds the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Missoula.

- Many families in Montana earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Montana with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year, and there are about 71,760 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[7] Montana led the nation as the state with the greatest increase in poverty in the 1980's—the number of children in poverty in Missoula doubled during this time.[8]

- Child care is unaffordable for many working families in Montana because wages have failed to keep pace with the rising cost of living. The typical (median) family income in Montana, adjusted for inflation, is $5,000 less than it was in 1993, according to Dr. Paul Miller, Professor Sociology at the University of Montana. Montana has had a greater fall in median wages than in any other state but one.[9] [Median income is the income below which half of the families in the state fall.]

- In Montana, average annual child care costs were $4,000 to $5,000 in 1997. Child care is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. The average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Missoula was $3,900, with fees as high as $4,160, and the average cost in Ravalli County was $3,536, with fees as high as $3,640.[10] These expenses are for only one child—families with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Montana[11]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Missoula		Ravalli County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,680	$5,200	n.a.	n.a.
4 years	$3,900	$4,160	$3,536	$3,640
8 years[12]	$2,995	$4,193	$2,037	$2,097

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Missoula		Ravalli County	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,420	$6,500	$3,900	$4,290
4 years	$3,900	$6,500	$3,770	$4,160
8 years	$2,246	$3,744	$2,696	$3,594

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in Missoula, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *40 percent* of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in Montana are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Montana allows only low-income working families with incomes below $24,660 (for a family of three) to be eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $30,693. Furthermore, as of January 1998, the state was planning to limit eligibility so that only families with incomes below $17,400 could be eligible for assistance, which would make Montana's cutoff among the lowest in the country.[13] Only four states have income cutoffs below $17,400.

Limiting child care assistance limits families' opportunities to improve their lives

"I don't know where I would be today without child care assistance," wrote Julie H., a Montana mother of a two-year-old boy. Without child care assistance, Julie would have to pay $280 a month for child care—more than a quarter of her $952 net monthly income. "If this happens, how can I afford to work and go to college to better myself and my son's future?"[14]

- In Montana, 600 to 700 families are on the waiting list for child care assistance—the majority of these families have incomes of $17,730 per year or lower. This list underestimates the number of eligible families who need assistance, as the state reports that fewer families are applying because they know there is not enough money to serve them.[15] Research has shown that low-income parents who need child care assistance but are unable to get it are likely to face serious financial difficulties, have difficulty staying employed, go on welfare, and/or have serious concerns about the quality of their children's care because they cannot afford good quality care.[16]

- Montana has already been grappling with how to handle the increase in the child care caseload that resulted when work requirements for welfare recipients increased in February 1997 from 10 to 20 hours per week.[17] The situation is likely to get worse in coming years, as more families are required to move from welfare to work. In a recent survey, Montana reported that, without additional funds, it is not confident that it will be able to meet the demand for child care assistance generated by the increase in welfare work requirements.[18] Low-income working families who are *not* on welfare may end up losing assistance as more families on welfare need help.

- Montana does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 11 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Montana spent 235 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[19]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Montana are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Montana affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[20] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[21] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[22]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Montana.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Montana's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Montana—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Montana's children from harm.

- Montana is one of the many states that do not adequately protect their children. For example, insufficient enforcement of Montana's licensing policies has been an ongoing concern in the state. Periodic inspections by licensing staff are one of the most important ways to ensure the safety and well-being of children in licensed child care programs, as the inspections allow licensers to detect safety risks, unsanitary practices, and situations where providers are caring for too many children to supervise adequately. Yet Montana recently cut back the number of licensers in the state. Child care licensing lost three full-time employees during the recent reorganization of the state bureaucracy.[23]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[24] Montana is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[25]
- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[26] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Montana was only $11,320 (only slightly above minimum wage).[27] Furthermore, national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[28]
- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in Montana. For example, one out of five (20 percent) family child care providers in Missoula go out of business each year. A similar percentage (19 percent) of family child care providers in Ravalli County go out of business each year as well.[29] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[30]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Montana.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs. Yet such programs are scarce in Montana. In 1997, only about 10 of Montana's 251 licensed child care centers (or 4 percent) were accredited.[31] This means that many families in Montana have little or no access to such programs. Only two of the 40 licensed operating child care centers in Missoula, and neither of the two licensed centers in Ravalli County, are accredited.[32]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Montana face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Montana school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Montana families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 30,526 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Montana live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[33]

- Montana children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[34] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[35] However,

- Montana children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[34] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[35] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[36] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Montana, only one out of twelve public schools (890 or 8 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[37]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Montana.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[38] This means as many as 4,900 babies in Montana are in child care if national patterns hold true.[39]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Montana's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping babies and toddlers grow, Montana allows a single provider to be responsible for as many as eight two-year-olds (age 27 months) at a time.[40] In contrast, early childhood experts recommend that no more than four to six toddlers this age per adult. It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, play, and care for eight active toddlers alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency such as a fire.
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Montana to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Missoula in 1997 averaged $4,680, but could cost as much as $5,200.[41]
- Montana child care resource and referral (CCR&R) agencies, which help families find care, report that infant care is in such short supply in both rural and urban areas that they are unable to provide referrals to parents needing care for their very young children.[42]

Other families in Montana face shortages of care as well—such as families with parents working nontraditional hours.

- Parents working shifts other than the typical "9-to-5" face particular difficulties locating child care, according to the Montana CCR&R network. In both urban and rural areas, there is an inadequate supply of part-time care and odd-hour care (care offered during evenings, overnight, and weekends).[43]

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Montana

Number of children younger than one[44]	10,886
Number of children younger than six[45]	67,677
Number of children ages six to 17[46]	165,074
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[47]	4,900
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[48]	40,600
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[49]	62%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[50]	77%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Montana

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[51]	71,760
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Montana[52]	$2,488

Annual Child Care Costs in Montana[53]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Missoula		Ravalli County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,680	$5,200	n.a.	n.a.
4 years	$3,900	$4,160	$3,536	$3,640
8 years[54]	$2,995	$4,193	$2,037	$2,097

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Missoula		Ravalli County	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,420	$6,500	$3,900	$4,290
4 years	$3,900	$6,500	$3,770	$4,160
8 years	$2,246	$3,744	$2,696	$3,594

Many Children in Montana Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Montana require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[55]	Yes
Does Montana require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[56]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in Montana in 1996[57]	$11,320
Annual turnover rate for family child care providers in Missoula, Montana[58]	20%
Percentage of child care centers in Montana that were accredited as of 1997[59]	4%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Montana[60]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[61]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	4	3-5	Yes
27 months	8	4-6	No
3 years	8	7-10	Yes
4 years	10	8-10	Yes

Other Child Care Indicators in Montana

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[62]	251
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[63]	*533*
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[64]	1,193
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[65]	8%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Dr. Paul Miller, Professor Sociology at the University of Montana, cited in Rosenleaf, *Welfare Reform and The Child Care Subsidy Shortfall* (Missoula, MT: Child Care Resources, Winter 1997).

[9] Rosenleaf, *Welfare Reform and The Child Care Subsidy Shortfall* (Missoula, MT: Child Care Resources, Winter 1997).

[10] Information from Montana CCR&R Network, Missoula, MT; collected in a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[11] Information from Montana CCR&R Network, Missoula, MT; collected in a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[12] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, *Book of Families* (Washington, DC: 1998).

[15] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[16] Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, *Valuing Families: The High Cost of Waiting for Child Care Sliding Fee Assistance* (Minneapolis, MN: 1995).

[17] Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, January 1998.

[18] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[19] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[20] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[21] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995)

[22] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[23] With a recent reorganization of state government, child care licensing was moved from the Division of Families and Children (where other child care programs such as the child care subsidy program and the child care food program reside) to the Division of Quality Assurance (which also covers cosmetologists and cattle branders).

Information from Montana CCR&R Network, Missoula, MT; collected in a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[24] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools (October 16, 1997).

[25] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[26] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[27] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[28] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[29] Information from Montana CCR&R Network, Missoula, MT; collected in a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[30] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[31] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[32] Information from Montana CCR&R Network, Missoula, MT; collected in a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[33] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[34]School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[35] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[36] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[37] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[38] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[39] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[40] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[41] Information from Montana CCR&R Network, Missoula, MT; collected in a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[42] Information from Montana CCR&R Network, Missoula, MT; collected in a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[43] Information from Montana CCR&R Network, Missoula, MT; collected in a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[44] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[45] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[46] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

[47] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[48] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[49] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[50] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[51] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[52] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[53] Information from Montana CCR&R Network, Missoula, MT; collected in a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[54] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[55] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[56] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[57] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[58] Information from Montana CCR&R Network, Missoula, MT; collected in a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[59] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm, and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[60] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[61] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[62] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[63] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[64] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[65] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

NEVADA:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Nevada parents.

- Every day, about 89,200 children younger than six are in child care in Nevada if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Nevada work to help support their families. An estimated 63 percent of Nevada mothers with children younger than six, and 80 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Nevada and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Nevada.

Child care is costly for many families in Nevada.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Nevada in 1997 was $1,814[6]—two-fifths the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Washoe County (Reno).
- Many families in Nevada earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Nevada with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 106,260 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[7]
- In Nevada, the cost of child care for one four-year-old in a child care center ranges from $4,160 to $6,240 in 1998. Child care is costly for families regardless of the age of the child—for example, in Washoe County (Reno), the average annual cost of care for an infant in a center is $5,200, and average annual cost for a four-year-old in a center is $4,420.[8] These expenses are for only one child—families with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Annual Cost of Child Care in Nevada[9]

Child Care Centers (1998)

	Statewide		Washoe County (Reno)
Age of child	Low	High	Average
12 months	$4,940	$7,800	$5,200
4 years	$4,160	$6,240	$4,420
8 years[10]	$2,738	$4,107	n.a.

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in Washoe County (Reno), a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *45 percent* of their income for child care.

> **Nevada families struggle to pay for child care**
>
> *"...child care is extremely expensive. I work as a temp, because I have a disabled five-year-old daughter who always has doctor appointments or needs to go to doctors out- of-state and I need the flexibility. I also have four other children and my husband stays home with the youngest three. The older two go to school all day. Anyway, in order for my husband to help out financially, he would either have to find a night job (which is difficult) or a decent daycare, which we can't find for [our] disabled [child].... If you make $10 per hour, that's $400 per week (minus taxes even less), then the daycare is $65 per week on average [per child], you end up with practically nothing....*[11]
>
> *Iris, a 30-year-old mother from Las Vegas*

Many low-income working families in Nevada are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Nevada allows only low-income working families with incomes below $31,536 (for a family of three) to be eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $35,746.[12] However, it is likely that there are eligible families who are not getting help because they do not know they are eligible, as the state is not confident that all eligible families know they can get child care assistance. The state is also not confident that it could serve all eligible families if they did know they could get child care help.[13]

- The demand for child care assistance is likely to rise in coming years, as more families are required to move from welfare to work. In a recent survey, Nevada was one of many states reporting that, without additional funds, it is not confident that it will be able to meet the demand for child care assistance generated by the increase in welfare work requirements.[14] Many states report that low-income working families who are *not* on welfare may end up losing assistance as more families on welfare need help.

- Even those families receiving child care assistance in Nevada shoulder a huge financial burden, as the state has some of the highest family copayment levels in the country. As of January 1998, a Nevada family of three earning only $19,995 a year (or only $1,670 a month) receiving child care help could still be required to pay as much as 18 percent of their income—

or $298 a month—in family copayments. This is almost twice as much as is recommended by experts, and is significantly more than families at the same income level would have to pay in most other states, including neighboring states such as California and Utah.[15] [The state is currently reviewing these policies.]

- Nevada does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 17 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Nevada spent 103 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[16] Although the state has significantly increased its spending for child care since 1994, additional resources are needed as many families remain unable to pay for the good child care their children need.

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Nevada are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Nevada affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[17] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[18] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[19]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Nevada.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Nevada's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Nevada—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Nevada's children from harm.
- Nevada is one of many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, for example, the state met recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for only *one* of the six age groups examined.[20] The state allowed a caregiver in a center to care for as many as 13 three-year-olds or four-year-olds alone, although experts recommend no more than seven to 10. This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[21] a child care provider in Nevada needs to receive only 12 hours of training within the first six months of starting work.[22] The requirement that Nevada providers receive 12 hours of training each year, while minimal, is an improvement, as previously child care providers needed only three hours of training per year.

- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[23] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Nevada was only $13,200.[24] Furthermore, national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[25]

- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in Nevada, where one-third of all child care teachers are estimated to leave their centers within a year.[26] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[27]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Nevada.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs, as accreditation is one measure of quality. Yet such programs are scarce in Nevada. In 1997, only about 30 of Nevada's 405 licensed child care centers (or 7 percent) were accredited.[28]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Nevada face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Nevada school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Nevada families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 36,542 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Nevada live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[29]

- Nevada children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[30] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[31] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[32] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.

- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities across the country. While more current data are not available, information from 1993-1994 show that 44 percent (or 365) of the public schools in Nevada offered extended-day programs in that year. Nationwide, children living in low-income neighborhoods are less likely to have schools that offer extended-day programs.[33]

- Nevada faces particular challenges in providing school-age care, as the state is the fastest growing state in the country. As a result, communities across the state are facing significant increases in need for school-age services—Las Vegas, for example, is growing by 4,000 to 6,000 families a month. Local experts in Nevada report that schools, Boys and Girls Clubs, and other community agencies are working hard to meet the ever-growing needs of school-age children.[34]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Nevada.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[35] This means as many as 11,200 babies in Nevada are in child care if national patterns hold true.[36]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Nevada's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping babies and toddlers grow, Nevada allows a single caregiver to care for 10 two-year-old toddlers (age 27 months) alone. In comparison, early childhood educators recommend that single caregiver be responsible for no more than four to six toddlers this age.[37] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, play, and care for 10 active two-year-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency such as a fire.
- Nevada's quality standards for infant care don't match up to those in other nearby states. In many western states—Montana, Oregon, Utah, and Washington—a child care provider is allowed to care for no more than four babies at a time. In comparison, Nevada permits a single adult caregiver to be responsible for as many as six ten-month-old infants at a time.[38]
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Nevada to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. In 1998, annual child care fees for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Nevada range from $4,940 to $7,800.[39]

Other families in Nevada face shortages of care as well—such as families where the parents work nontraditional hours.

- Parents working hours other than the typical "9-to-5" shift face particularly serious challenges trying to locate the child care they need. For instance, in northern Nevada, parents who work the casino swing-shift and other odd-hour shifts have difficulty finding care for their children. These families face even greater difficulties if their children are younger than two.[40]

Nevada employers find that providing child care for their employees is good business

Locating child care can be so challenging for parents that when, in the rare circumstance employers do provide on-site child care facilities, parents quickly take advantage of the opportunity. Nevada business representatives that offer on-site child care find that such employee benefits are an effective way to attract good employees and keep costs down. Keri Meranda says that at her company, Washoe Health System, 85 percent of parents who stay there do so because child care is part of the package. Joe Manzo, director of Human Resources at Citibank's Clark County facility in Las Vegas echoes the sentiment. His company offers child care on-site for employees for 30 percent less than the going rate.[41]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Nevada

Number of children younger than one[42]	24,785
Number of children younger than six[43]	148,618
Number of children ages six to 17[44]	268,132
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[45]	11,200
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[46]	89,200
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[47]	63%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[48]	80%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Nevada

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[49]	106,260
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Nevada[50]	$1,814

Annual Child Care Costs in Nevada[51]

Child Care Centers (1998)

	Statewide		Washoe County (Reno)
Age of Child	Average	High	Average
12 months	$4,940	$7,800	$5,200
4 years	$4,160	$6,240	$4,420
8 years[52]	$2,738	$4,107	n.a.

Many Children in Nevada Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Nevada require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[53]	Yes
Does Nevada require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[54]	Yes
Average salary for a child care worker in Nevada in 1996[55]	$13,200
Annual turnover rate for child care teachers in Nevada[56]	33%
Percentage of child care centers in Nevada that were accredited as of 1997[57]	7%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Nevada[58]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[59]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	6*	3-4	No
18 months	6	3-5	No
27 months	10	4-6	No
3 years	13	7-10	No
4 years	13	8-10	No

*Nevada's regulations are unclear for this age—it allows 6 children ages 9-18 mos. per adult, and 4 children 0-9 mos. per adult.

Other Child Care Indicators in Nevada

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[60]	405
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[61]	30
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[62]	606

Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[63]	44%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Statewide cost data from the Nevada Department of Human Resources and Washoe County cost data from the Children's Cabinet, Inc., Reno, NV; collected through a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[9] Statewide cost data from the Nevada Department of Human Resources and Washoe County cost data from the Children's Cabinet, Inc., Reno, NV; collected through a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[10] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[11] From Lifetime Television's online project "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment" which collects stories about child care from families around the country. It is found at www.lifetimetv.com.

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[15] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[16] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996). In 1997, the Nevada legislature did increase its investment, allocating sufficient funds to draw down all of their share of new federal dollars.

[17] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[18] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[19] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[20] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts. While the data from the Center report that the state allows eight 18-month-olds per adult, the state reports that—though their published data are unclear—they actually limit the number of

children this age to six per adult. The one-to-eight ratio is for children *over* 18 months old. Conversation with Lisa Roberts of the Nevada Licensing agency, May 1998.

[21] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools (October 16, 1997).

[22] Conversation with Marilyn Ives of Reno, NV, Children's Cabinet, Inc., March 1998.

[23] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[24] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[25] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[26] According to a state official in the office of Nevada's Governor Bob Miller Bates, cited in "Low wages, high turnover cited as child care woes," *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, October 24, 1997, p. 5A.

[27] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[28] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[29] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[30] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[31] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S DOJ, June 1997).

[32] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[33] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[34] Communication from Jerry Allen, Nevada Department of Human Services Welfare Division, April 1998.

[35] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[36] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[37] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts. While the data from the Center report that the state allows eight 18-month-olds per adult, the state reports that—while their published data are unclear—they limit the number of children this age to six per adult. The one-to-eight ratio is for children *over* 18 months old. Conversation with Lisa Roberts of the Nevada Licensing agency, May 1998.

[38] Trillhaase, "Dead last where it counts," Idaho Falls, ID: *Idaho Falls Post Register*, August 19, 1997, p. A9.

[39] Statewide cost data from the Nevada Department of Human Resources and Washoe County cost data from the Children's Cabinet, Inc., Reno, NV; collected through a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[40] Conversation with Marilyn Ives of Reno, NV, Children's Cabinet, Inc., March 1998.

[41] Bates, "Low wages, high turnover cited as child care woes," *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, October 24, 1997, p. 5A.

[42] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[43] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[44] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[45] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[46] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[47] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[48] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[49] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[50] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[51] Statewide cost data from the Nevada Department of Human Resources and Washoe County cost data from the Children's Cabinet, Inc., Reno, NV; collected through a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[52] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[53] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing.* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[54] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing.* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[55] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[56] According to a state official in the office of Nevada's Governor Bob Miller Bates, cited in "Low wages, high turnover cited as child care woes," *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, October 24, 1997, p. 5A.

[57] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm, and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[58] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts. While the data from the Center report that the state allows eight 18-month-olds per adult, the state reports that—while their published data are unclear—they limit the number of children this age to six per adult. The one-to-eight ratio is for children *over* 18 months old. Conversation with Lisa Roberts of the Nevada Licensing agency, May 1998.

[59] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[60] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[61] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[62] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[63] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

NEW MEXICO:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many New Mexico parents.

- Every day, about 98,500 children younger than six are in child care in New Mexico if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in New Mexico work to help support their families. An estimated 56 percent of New Mexico mothers with children younger than six, and 71 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in New Mexico and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in New Mexico.

Child care is costly for many families in New Mexico.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in New Mexico in 1997 was $2,016[6]—about half the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center.
- Many families in New Mexico earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in New Mexico with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 211,140 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[7]
- In New Mexico, child care for an infant or preschooler in a center easily costs an average of $3,900 to $4,500 a year. In urban areas, the average cost of care is higher. For instance, in Albuquerque, the average cost of center-based care for a four-year-old was $4,190 and the average cost for an infant was $4,903 in 1997.[8] These costs are for only one child—families with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Annual Cost of Child Care in New Mexico[9]

Child Care Centers (1997)		
Age of child	Statewide (average)	Albuquerque metro area (average)
12 months	$4,487	$4,903
4 years	$3,943	$4,190
Family Child Care Homes (1997)		
Age of child	Statewide (average)	Albuquerque metro area (high)
12 months	$3,637	$5,720
4 years	$3,133	$5,200

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in New Mexico, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *39 percent* of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in New Mexico are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- New Mexico is concerned about its ability to serve families who need child care assistance. As of January 1998, New Mexico estimated that it would not be able to continue serving all eligible families who applied for child care assistance by spring 1998, unless the state lowered eligibility levels or added funds.[10] Furthermore, the state indicated that it is not confident that all eligible families know they can get child care assistance, or that state could serve all eligible families if they did know they could get child care help.[11]
- The situation is likely to get worse in coming years, as more families are required to move from welfare to work. In a recent survey, New Mexico reported that, without additional funds, it is not confident that it will be able to meet the demand for child care assistance generated by the increase in welfare work requirements.[12] The state is already grappling with the dramatic increase in the child care caseload that resulted when the welfare work requirements were implemented last summer—the child care caseload increased from 9,635 to 15,376 between August and December 1997.[13] Low-income working families who are *not* on welfare may end up losing assistance as the number of families on welfare needing help continues to grow.
- New Mexico does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 24 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, New Mexico spent 103 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[14]

Even those New Mexico families fortunate enough to receive child care assistance face limited options due to inadequate state policies.

- Low-income families in New Mexico who receive child care assistance often still face financial hardships due to high state fees. In October 1997, the state increased the amount that parents receiving child care assistance had to pay toward the cost of care. As a result of the changes, some families saw their copayments increase significantly. For example, a single mother earning $18,000 per year ($1,500 per month) and needing child care for her two children had her copayment increase from $32 per month to $269 per month.[15] This is an increase of over 800 percent, and leaves her paying nearly one-fifth of her income for child care—significantly more than the level recommended by experts.

- Many low-income parents in New Mexico cannot afford the high copayments required of families receiving child care assistance. As a result, some parents eligible for assistance do not apply for subsidies, and instead place their children in unregulated, less expensive care, or have the children care for themselves. Parents who do receive child care assistance are often unable to make the copayments that they owe their child care providers. In such situations, providers are left with the difficult choice of either refusing to continue to provide care for the child, or subsidizing the care out of their own limited budget.[16]
- It is not clear that there are enough child care providers willing to serve the many families moving off welfare. A child care resource and referral (CCR&R) agency in Albuquerque that helps families find care reports that it is difficult in some communities to find providers willing to take children receiving child care assistance because the state does not pay enough to cover what many providers charge.[17]
- Local resource and referral agencies, which help families find care, report that many programs will not serve school-age children receiving child care assistance, because the state payments for such care do not cover the cost of care. While many centers charge a daily rate of $13, the state only pays $11.[18]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in New Mexico are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in New Mexico affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[19] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[20] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[21]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in New Mexico.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of New Mexico's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, New Mexico—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect New Mexico's children from harm.
- New Mexico is one of the many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, for example, New Mexico did not meet recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for *any* of the six age groups examined.[22] The state allowed a caregiver in a center to care for as many as 12 three-year-olds or four-

year-olds alone, although experts recommend no more than seven to 10. This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.

- New Mexico allows individuals caring for as many as four children in their home to operate without a license.[23] This means that a provider with a history of child abuse could legally care for four children in his/her home, and that a program could legally operate with safety hazards such as uncovered electrical outlets or poisonous substances that are not locked away.
- While New Mexico requires child care providers caring for four or more children to be licensed, these requirements have often not been enforced due to inadequate numbers of licensing staff. The hiring freeze that was in place has been lifted, but state resource and referral agencies report that there still are not enough staff to ensure that licensed providers are meeting basic health and safety standards or to follow through with programs that are in violation of state requirements. Over the past several years, no licensed centers in Albuquerque found violating regulations have been closed down.[24]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[25] New Mexico is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[26] It is also one of 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior training.[27]
- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[28] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in New Mexico was only $11,880 (only slightly above minimum wage).[29] National studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[30]
- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in New Mexico. For example, one out of five (20 percent) Albuquerque family child care providers go out of business each year.[31] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[32]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in New Mexico.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in New Mexico. In 1997, only 42 of New Mexico's 256 licensed child care centers (16 percent) were accredited.[33] Only 16 of the 209 centers in Albuquerque were accredited.[34]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across New Mexico face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

Many families in New Mexico have trouble finding good child care in their communities.

- Local child care resource and referral (CCR&R) agencies throughout the country help families find the quality, affordable child care they need. Unfortunately, many families in New Mexico lack access to this type of assistance. The state's CCR&Rs cover only seven of New Mexico's 32 counties, and these agencies do not receive funding for their resource and referral services from the state.[35] Many states across the country provide state and federal funds to support CCR&R agencies, as they recognize the importance of such agencies in helping families find care and in working with providers to improve quality.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many New Mexico school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many New Mexico families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 101,028 school-age children (ages five to 17) in New Mexico live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[36]
- New Mexico children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[37] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[38] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[39] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In New Mexico, only about one out of five public schools (663 or 22 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[40]
- A child care resource and referral agency in Albuquerque reports that many parents are unable to find child care for their school-age children, particularly when the children need transportation from school to the before- and after-school program.[41] This creates problems for the many working parents who find it very difficult, if not impossible, to leave work to take their child to their after-school program.

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in New Mexico.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[42] This means as many as 11,800 babies in New Mexico are in child care if national patterns hold true.[43]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years

lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care New Mexico's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.

- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping babies and toddlers grow, New Mexico allows a single caregiver to care for six 18-month-old toddlers. In comparison, early childhood educators recommend that a single caregiver be responsible for no more than three to five toddlers this age.[44] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, diaper, play, and care for six active 18-month-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency such as a fire.
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in New Mexico to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in New Mexico in 1997 averaged $4,487.[45]
- Parents in New Mexico have difficulty finding infant care, a problem which is likely to increase given that the need for infant care is rising. A child care resource and referral agency that serves families in the metropolitan Albuquerque area and Bernalillo, Valencia, Sandoval and Torrance Counties reports that they are often unable to provide referrals for care for infants due to lack of supply.[46] The supply problem became even more critical in early 1998, as two centers in Albuquerque providing care for infants and toddlers closed.[47]

Other families in New Mexico face shortages of care as well—such as families where the parents work nontraditional hours or the children have special needs.

- Parents who work hours other than the typical "9-to-5" shift have particular difficulties finding care in New Mexico. For example, families in the Albuquerque area and in Bernalillo, Valencia, Sandoval and Torrance Counties have been struggling to find care during nontraditional hours (such as evenings, overnight, or weekends), even with the help of a local resource and referral agency.[48]
- Similarly, an Albuquerque resource and referral agency reports that families who have children with special needs experience serious problems in trying to find child care.[49]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in New Mexico

Number of children younger than one[50]	26,226
Number of children younger than six[51]	164,239
Number of children ages six to 17[52]	336,994
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[53]	11,800
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[54]	98,500
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[55]	56%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[56]	71%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in New Mexico

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[57]	211,140
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in New Mexico[58]	$2,016

Annual Child Care Costs in New Mexico[59]

Child Care Centers (1997)

Age of Child	Statewide (average)	Albuquerque metro area (average)
12 months	$4,487	$4,903
4 years	$3,943	$4,190

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

Age of Child	Statewide (average)	Albuquerque metro area (high)
12 months	$3,637	$5,720
4 years	$3,133	$5,200

Many Children in New Mexico Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does New Mexico require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[60]	No
Does New Mexico require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[61]	No
Average salary for a child care worker in New Mexico in 1996[62]	$11,880
Annual turnover rate for family child care providers in Albuquerque, New Mexico in 1997-98[63]	20%
Percentage of child care centers in New Mexico that were accredited as of 1997[64]	16%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in New Mexico[65]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[66]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	6	3-4	No
18 months	6	3-5	No
27 months	10	4-6	No
3 years	12	7-10	No
4 years	12	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in New Mexico

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[67]	256
Number of licensed family child care homes in 1997[68]	233
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[69]	22%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995*. Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from YWCA/Carino CCR&R, Albuquerque, NM; collected by a joint survey from the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998. Statewide cost data were calculated by averaging costs in rural and urban areas, and were not weighted to reflect that a greater proportion of the state's centers and homes are located in urban areas, where costs are higher. Therefore, the statewide averages reported may be underestimates.

[9] Information from YWCA/Carino CCR&R, Albuquerque, NM, collected by a joint survey from the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998. Statewide cost data were calculated by averaging costs in rural and urban areas, and were not weighted to reflect that a greater proportion of the state's centers and homes are located in urban areas, where costs are higher. Therefore, the statewide averages reported may be underestimates.

[10] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[11] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] According to New Mexico's Department of Children, Youth, and Families, reported by Oswald, "Budget plan boosts funding for child care," Santa Fe, NM: *The Santa Fe New Mexican*, January 16, 1998, p. B-4.

[14] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education*. (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[15] Information from YWCA/Carino CCR&R, Albuquerque, NM; collected by a joint survey from the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998 and from a telephone conversation with Disa Lindgren, April 24, 1998.

[16] Information from YWCA/Carino CCR&R, Albuquerque, NM, April 1998.

[17] Information from YWCA/Carino CCR&R, Albuquerque, NM, collected by a joint survey from the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[18] Gran, "Day-care centers say N.M. shouldn't cut low-income help," Albuquerque, NM: *Albuquerque Tribune*, December 2, 1997, p. A1.

[19] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[20] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[21] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

[22] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[23] Information from YWCA/Carino CCR&R, Albuquerque, NM; collected by a joint survey from the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[24] Information from YWCA/Carino CCR&R, Albuquerque, NM, April 1998. Providers are required to have a criminal background check, but this check does not show substantiated abuse-only convictions (information from Jolene Maes at the New Mexico Human Needs Coordinating Council and New Mexico Advocates for Children and Families, April 24, 1998).

[25] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools (October 16, 1997).

[26] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[27] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[28] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[29] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[30] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[31] Information from YWCA/Carino CCR&R, Albuquerque, NM; collected by a joint survey from the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[32] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[33] Information from YWCA/Carino CCR&R, Albuquerque, NM.

[34] Information from YWCA/Carino CCR&R, Albuquerque, NM; collected by a joint survey from the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[35] Information from YWCA/Carino CCR&R, Albuquerque, NM; collected by a joint survey from the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998. CCR&R agencies in New Mexico do receive state funding to provide training and technical assistance, but not for referral services.

[36] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[37] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[38] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[39] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[40] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[41] Information from YWCA/Carino CCR&R, Albuquerque, NM, collected by a joint survey from the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[42] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[43] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[44] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[45] Information from YWCA/Carino CCR&R, Albuquerque, NM, collected by a joint survey from the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[46] Information from YWCA/Carino CCR&R, Albuquerque, NM; collected by a joint survey from the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[47] Jolene Maes at the New Mexico Human Needs Coordinating Council and New Mexico Advocates for Children and Families, April 24, 1998.

[48] Information from YWCA/Carino CCR&R, Albuquerque, NM; collected by a joint survey from the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[49] Information from YWCA/Carino CCR&R, Albuquerque, NM; collected by a joint survey from the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[50] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[51] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[52] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[53] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[54] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[55] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[56] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[57] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[58] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[59] Information from YWCA/Carino CCR&R, Albuquerque, NM; collected by a joint survey from the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998. Statewide cost data were calculated by averaging costs in rural and urban areas, and were not weighted to reflect that a greater proportion of the state's centers and homes are located in urban areas, where costs are higher. Therefore, the statewide averages reported may be underestimates.

[60] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[61] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[62] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[63] Information from YWCA/Carino CCR&R, Albuquerque, NM; collected by a joint survey from the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[64] Information from YWCA/Carino CCR&R, Albuquerque, NM.

[65] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[66] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[67] Information from YWCA/Carino CCR&R, Albuquerque, NM.

[68] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[69] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

OREGON:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Oregon parents.

- Every day, about 153,700 children younger than six are in child care in Oregon if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Oregon work to help support their families. An estimated 59 percent of Oregon mothers with children younger than six, and 77 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Oregon and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Oregon.

Child care is costly for many families in Oregon.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Oregon in 1997 was $3,407[6]—less than three-quarters the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Salem.
- Many families in Oregon earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Oregon with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 250,470 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[7]
- In Oregon, child care for a preschooler or an infant in 1997 easily cost an average of $4,000 to $6,000 per year. Child care was expensive for families whether they lived in urban or rural areas. For instance, the average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Salem in 1997 was $4,723, with fees as high as $5,085, and the average cost in Hood River/Wasco County was $3,858, with fees as high as $4,329.[8] These expenses are for only one child—families with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Oregon[9]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Salem		Hood River/ Wasco Counties	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$5,857	$6,500	$4,797	$5,031
4 years	$4,723	$5,085	$3,858	$4,329
8 years[10]	$2,396	$2,696	$1,941	$2,396

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Salem		Hood River/ Wasco Counties	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,285	$9,360	$4,095	$4,680
4 years	$4,085	$9,360	$4,095	$4,680
8 years	$2,192	$4,792	$2,049	$2,396

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in Salem, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *49 percent* of their income for child care.

Oregon families worry about the cost and quality of child care

Cheryl, a 48-year-old mother in Portland writes: "I work for the state of Oregon as an Employment Specialist but I used to be on welfare. I have heard it from countless job applicants and have lived it myself. Most low-skill, no-skill jobs and even many semi-skilled jobs do not pay enough to support the household and cover child care costs, even in double-income families. So much the worse for single parents. And the cost incurred does not even address the question of the quality of child care available. I can't believe, in a country as rich as this one, that solutions aren't available. Do we want an America that works...or one that has to stay home? Many couples work rotating shifts because they can't afford to, or are afraid to put their children in daycare. And it is impossible to find child care if you work nights. These days having Grandma take care of the kids is not always an option because she is most often working herself."[11]

Many low-income working families in Oregon are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Oregon only allows families with incomes below about $25,060 (for a family of three) to be eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $33,000. This cutoff is lower than that in a number of other states, including nearby states such as California and Nevada.[12]
- Even with Oregon's low income cutoffs, the state reports that it is not confident that it would be able to serve all eligible families if they knew they could get help paying their child care expenses.[13]
- Oregon does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 68 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three

years of life, Oregon spent 37 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[14]

Low-income Oregon families fortunate enough to receive child care assistance still face financial hardship and limited options due to inadequate state policies.

- Families receiving child care assistance in Oregon continue to shoulder a huge financial burden, as the state requires higher family copayments than all but one other state. As of January 1998, a family of three earning only $19,995 a year (or only $1,670 a month) receiving child care help were required to pay *22 percent* of their income (or $365 a month) in family copayments. This is more than twice as much as is recommended by experts, and is two to three times as much as is required by most other states. As a result of such high fees, the state reports that many families eligible for assistance do not use it.[15] The state plans to address this problem by lowering family copayments in July 1998.[16]
- Families in Oregon who receive child care assistance still face enormous difficulties finding providers who will take care of their children, since the amount the state will pay for care is below current market prices. With such low reimbursement rates, Oregon families face untenable choices—either they find that many providers in their community refuse to serve their children because the state rate is too low, or the parent has to pay the additional amount needed to make up the difference between the state's low rates and rate charged by the provider (which adds a significant additional cost to the already extremely high parent copayment).[17] The state did raise reimbursement rates in October 1997 and plans to increase them again in summer 1998, but the rates will still be below market prices.[18]
- A number of nearby states, including California, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming, all pay at levels that reflect more current market prices, thus allowing families receiving child care subsidies to have a significantly broader range of choices than in Oregon.[19]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Oregon are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Oregon affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[20] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[21] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[22]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Oregon.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Oregon's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Oregon—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Oregon's children from harm.

- Far too many states do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, Oregon was one of only nine states that met recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for all six age groups examined.[23]
- Too many children in Oregon are not sufficiently protected. The state allows children to be cared for by providers who are not regulated or only have to meet minimal requirements:
  - ⇒ Although about half of Oregon children whose families pay for child care are in family child care homes, many homes can operate with little regulation. The state only requires people wishing to care for children in their homes to attend an "overview" session to become registered. The state does not inspect the provider's home for safety hazards such as uncovered electrical outlets and poisons that are not locked away.[24]
  - ⇒ In Oregon, a family child care provider caring for a child for as many as seventy days per year would not even have to register.[25] This means that a person caring for a group of children for an entire summer would not have to meet even the most minimal standards, such as a background check for a history of child abuse.
- Many providers in Oregon lack basic training to ensure the health and safety of children in their care. For instance, current first aid certification was only held by one-quarter (24 percent) of the 390 providers listed with Oregon's Child Care Resources agency (which covers Deshutes, Crook, and Jefferson Counties), and only one in seven (15 percent) had a current CPR certification.[26]
- Periodic inspections by licensing staff are one of the most important ways to ensure the safety and well-being of children in licensed child care programs, as the inspections allow licensers to detect unsafe situations such as safety risks, unsanitary practices, and too many children per adult to supervise adequately. Yet family child care homes in Oregon are not routinely inspected to ensure that they are at least meeting the minimal health and safety protections that do exist.[27]
- Due to the inadequate funding of state child care licensing staff, Oregon's Child Care Division staff respond to just 1 percent of complaints received.[28] *The Oregonian* reported that staff investigate only if someone complains that children are in imminent danger or that 16 or more children are in the home, five more than the maximum allowed by law. In comparison, a number of other states, including Washington and California, have a policy of investigating every complaint regarding family child care programs.[29]

Neighboring states have stronger protections for children in family child care

Before becoming a child care provider three years ago, a provider had to install smoke detectors, practice fire drills, take first-aid training, ban smoking and open her Vancouver, WA home to an inspection. None of this would have been necessary in Oregon. Washington providers are thankful for the state's stiff regulations for family child care providers, typically women who open their homes to small numbers of children. "You have to have high standards," a provider said, "These are our children we're talking about."[30]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[31] Oregon is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[32] It is also one of 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior training.[33]

- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—and often not as much as bartenders ($14,450).[34] In 1994 in Oregon, assistant teachers in child care centers earned an average salary of only $10,980 per year, and experienced teachers in child care centers earned an average of only $15,780 per year.[35] Furthermore, national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[36]

- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in Oregon—for example, in 1996-97, almost two out of five family child care providers in the central region of the state stopped providing services.[37] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[38]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Oregon.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs. Yet, such programs are scarce in Oregon. In 1997, only about 32 of Oregon's 933 licensed child care centers (or 3 percent) were accredited.[39] Accredited centers are difficult to find in communities throughout the state, but particularly in rural areas. Twenty-nine of the 32 accredited centers in the state are in the Portland metropolitan area, with only three in the remaining 29 rural counties.[40]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Oregon face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Oregon school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Oregon families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 83,476 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Oregon live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[41]

- Oregon children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[42] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[43] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of

problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[44] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.

- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Oregon, only one in four public schools (1,184 or 24 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[45]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Oregon.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care. Nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[46] This means as many as 18,900 babies in Oregon are in child care if national patterns hold true.[47]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Oregon's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping babies grow, many states allow a single caregiver to care for too many infants and toddlers. In 1997, Oregon was one of only 13 states in the country that met recommended levels for the number of babies and toddlers a single caregiver was allowed to care for.[48]
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Oregon to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. For example, child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Salem in 1997 averaged $5,857, but could cost as much as $6,500.[49]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Oregon

Number of children younger than one[50]	42,017
Number of children younger than six[51]	256,155
Number of children ages six to 17[52]	552,251
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[53]	18,900
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[54]	153,700
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[55]	59%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[56]	77%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Oregon

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[57]	250,470
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Oregon[58]	$3,407

Annual Child Care Costs in Oregon[59]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Salem		Hood River/Wasco Counties	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$5,857	$6,500	$4,797	$5,031
4 years	$4,723	$5,085	$3,858	$4,329
8 years[60]	$2,396	$2,696	$1,941	$2,396

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Salem		Hood River/Wasco Counties	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,285	$9,360	$4,095	$4,680
4 years	$4,085	$9,360	$4,095	$4,680
8 years	$2,192	$4,792	$2,049	$2,396

Many Children in Oregon Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Oregon require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children? [61]		No
Does Oregon require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children? [62]		No
Average salaries for child care center staff in Oregon in 1994:[63]	assistants	$10,980
	experienced teachers	$15,780
Annual turnover rate for family child care providers in Central Oregon in 1996-97[64]		39%
Percentage of child care centers in Oregon that were accredited as of 1997[65]		3%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Oregon[66]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[67]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	4	3-5	Yes
27 months	4	4-6	Yes
3 years	10	7-10	Yes
4 years	10	8-10	Yes

Other Child Care Indicators in Oregon

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[68]	933
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[69]	217
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[70]	10,950
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[71]	24%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from Oregon Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Salem, OR; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[9] Information from Oregon Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Salem, OR; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[10] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[11] From Lifetime Television's online project "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment" which collects stories about child care from families around the country. It is found at www.lifetimetv.com.

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[15] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[16] Information from Karen Gorton at the Metro Child Care Resource and Referral in Portland, OR, April 29, 1998.

[17] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[18] Information from Karen Gorton at the Metro Child Care Resource and Referral in Portland, OR, April 29, 1998.

[19] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[20] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[21] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[22] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[23] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[24] Information from Oregon Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Salem, OR; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[25] Oregon Child Care Resource and Referral Network, *Fact Sheet* (Salem, OR: Oregon Child Care Resource and Referral Network, December 1997).

[26] Information from Oregon Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Salem, OR; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[27] Oregon Child Care Resource and Referral Network, *Fact Sheet* (Salem, OR: Oregon Child Care Resource and Referral Network, December 1997).

[28] Oregon Child Care Resource and Referral Network, *Fact Sheet* (Salem, OR: Oregon Child Care Resource and Referral Network, December 1997).

[29] Blackmun, "Lax laws put kids at risk," Portland, OR: *The Oregonian*, November 5, 1996.

[30] Blackmun, "Lax laws put kids at risk," Portland, OR: *The Oregonian*, November 5, 1996.

[31] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools (October 16, 1997).

[32] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[33] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[34] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[35] *The Oregon Survey of Child Care Center Salaries, Benefits and Working Conditions: 1994*, prepared by the Center for the Child Care Workforce for the Oregon Association for the Education of Young Children, Tualatin, OR. Annual salary calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 hours per year.

[36] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[37] The Child Care Resources agency of Central Oregon enrolled 219 providers in 1996-97, but 253 discontinued caring for children. The result was a net loss of 34 providers, and a year-end total of 390. Data from the Oregon Child Care Resource and Referral Network, *The Status of Child Care in Central Oregon, 1996-1997* (Salem, OR: Oregon Child Care Resource and Referral Network, 1997).

[38] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[39] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[40] Oregon Child Care Resource and Referral Network, *Fact Sheet* (Salem, OR: Oregon Child Care Resource and Referral Network, December 1997).

[41] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[42] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[43] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[44] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[45] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[46] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[47] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[48] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[49] Information from Oregon Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Salem. OR; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[50] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[51] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[52] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[53] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[54] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[55] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[56] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[57] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[58] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[59] Information from Oregon Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Salem, OR; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[60] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[61] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing.* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[62] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing.* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[63] *The Oregon Survey of Child Care Center Salaries, Benefits and Working Conditions: 1994*, prepared by the Center for the Child Care Workforce for the Oregon Association for the Education of Young Children, Tualatin, OR.

[64] The Child Care Resources agency of Central Oregon enrolled 219 providers in 1996-97, but 253 discontinued caring for children. The result was a net loss of 34 providers, and a year-end total of 390. Data from the Oregon Child Care Resource and Referral Network, *The Status of Child Care in Central Oregon, 1996-1997* (Salem, OR: Oregon Child Care Resource and Referral Network, 1997).

[65] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs:

Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[66] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[67] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[68] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[69] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[70] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[71] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

UTAH:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Utah parents.

- Every day, about 134,900 children younger than six are in child care in Utah if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Almost 300,000 children younger than 13 in Utah were estimated to have either their single parent or both their mother and father in the workforce in 1994.[2] Child care is essential to enable the parents of these children to go to work each day.
- Most mothers in Utah work to help support their families. An estimated 57 percent of Utah mothers with children younger than six, and 76 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[3]
- For many mothers in Utah and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[4] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[5] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[6]

Business leaders know that child care is important to their workforce

Kevin Mansfield, human resource manager for SPS Payment Systems, Inc. in Layton, was quoted in the Utah Standard-Examiner on the need for businesses to address child care. "It's more than obvious that there's a direct correlation with attendance and productivity with child care," said Mansfield, who was co-chairman of a employer task force targeting the issue. "I read the exit interviews when people leave and it's 'I'd love to stay here but I just can't make my child care arrangements work,'" he said. "You get enough of those and start seeing those on a weekly basis and you start to think we need to do more with this."[7]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Utah.

Child care is costly for many families in Utah.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Utah in 1997 was $2,010[8]—less than two-thirds the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center.
- Many families in Utah earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Utah with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 198,030 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[9]
- In Utah, child care for a four-year-old in a child care center cost an average of $3,266 in 1997, with fees as high as $4,160. Child care is costly for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. For example, the average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Provo was $3,488, with fees as high as $4,008; and the average cost in Richfield was $3,055, with fees as high as $3,120.[10] These expenses are for only one child—parents with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Utah[11]

Child Care Centers (1997)

Age of child	Statewide		Provo		Richfield	
	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,351	$5,408	$4,837	$5,085	$4,420	$4,680
4 years	$3,266	$4,160	$3,488	$4,008	$3,055	$3,120
8 years[12]	$3,079	n.a.	$2,995	$3,534	$2,995	$2,995

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

Age of child	Statewide		Provo		Richfield	
	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,597	$5,850	$3,836	$5,265	$3,420	$4,680
4 years	$3,145	$5,200	$3,722	$4,786	$2,887	$4,329
8 years	$2,624	n.a.	$1,941	$2,396	$1,917	$2,216

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in Utah, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *36 percent* of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in Utah are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Many hard-working low-income families in Utah are not eligible for child care assistance. The state ranks among the bottom third of all states in making low-income families eligible for assistance. Utah only allows families with incomes below about $21,100 (for a family of three) to be eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $32,600. This cutoff is lower than the cutoff in many other western states, including Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, and Colorado.[13]

- There are families who are eligible for child care assistance in Utah who are not getting services, as the state is not confident that all families who *are* eligible know they could get help paying their child care expenses. The state reports that this is likely to be more common among low-income working families who are not on welfare.[14]
- Utah does not invest enough in helping families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 73 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Utah spent 59 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[15]

Low-income Utah families struggle to afford good child care on their own, but child care assistance can help

Jennifer is a 29-year-old mother of two little girls, ages three and five. She has been divorced for a year and does not get any child support from her ex-husband. Prior to her divorce, Jennifer worked part-time. At that point, she says, "I didn't have to worry about child care, because I worked evenings when my husband was at home."

After the divorce, Jennifer needed to work full-time in order to support her children. In order to have more time with her children she works three twelve-hour shifts from 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m., three days a week. Although she has a college degree, she only makes $11.19 per hour as a medical technician, which results in a monthly take-home pay of only $1,120. Jennifer's child care costs alone are almost half of her income—her monthly child care bills are $485 ($245 for her three-year-old and $240 for her five-year-old). Her rent is $530 per month. Her finances were so tight she says, "I ended up using a credit card to pay a couple months' rent because I had to buy food—I was so frustrated I felt like giving up."

Not only was it difficult for Jennifer to pay for her child care, but she also had a hard time finding child care with which she felt satisfied. She says, "I went to four or five homes—three were booked and the other one I didn't feel comfortable with. Finally, I ended up taking my kids to two different day care centers, before I found one I liked—Children's Corner."

Because of the difficulty Jennifer was having in paying her child care bills she called the Department of Workforce Services last November to inquire about child care assistance. She had difficulty getting help because her income was very close to the income cutoff for eligibility, but with persistence she finally managed to get the paperwork processed and was given help.

Jennifer now receives help paying for child care, which reduces her monthly child care costs from $485 to $281 per month—which is still one out of every four dollars she earns. She says, "The assistance I get helps a lot but they need to find a bracket for people in my situation—who make too much to qualify for any other assistance.... Sometimes I've thought about being home with my kids—I could be home with my kids on welfare if I quit my job. If we want women to work and not be on welfare we need to give them child care assistance."[16]

Even those Utah families fortunate enough to get help paying for child care often face limited options due to inadequate state policies.

- Those families who do get child care assistance in Utah continue to shoulder a huge financial burden, as the state has some of the highest family copayment levels in the country—only four states require families to pay more. As of January 1998, a family of three earning only $19,995 a year (or only $1,670 a month before taxes) receiving child care help could still be required to pay as much as 13 percent of their income—or $220 a month—in family copayments. This level is higher than recommended by experts, and makes it difficult for low-income families to afford other essentials such as food, rent and health care.[17]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Utah are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Utah affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[18] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[19] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[20]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Utah.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Utah's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Utah—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Utah's children from harm.

- Utah is one of the many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, for example, the state met recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for only three of six age groups examined.[21] For example, the state allowed a caregiver in a center to care for as many as 12 three-year-olds or 15 four-year-olds alone, although early childhood experts recommend no more than seven to 10. This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.

- A 1997 legislative audit indicated that Utah's system for protecting children in child care is rife with problems, and criticized the lack of state enforcement of child care licensing rules. The report found that one out of three child care centers in the state had repeated serious health and safety violations.[22]

- Utah allows individuals caring for as many as four children in their homes, in addition to any related children, to operate without having to meet *any* health and safety protections required for licensing or certification. This means that a provider with a history of child abuse could legally care for as many as four children in his/her home, and that a program could legally operate with a provider who does not have first aid or CPR training and where there are safety hazards such as uncovered electrical outlets or poisonous substances that are not locked away.[23]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[24] Utah is one of the 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without any prior early childhood training.[25]
- In 1995, only 8 percent of all child care teachers in Utah had received college degrees in early childhood education or a related field, according to a survey of licensed centers.[26]
- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[27] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Utah was only $12,280 (only slightly above minimum wage).[28]

Child care providers in Utah get few job-related benefits, such as health insurance, vacation days, or paid sick leave

Child care providers not only earn minimal salaries—they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave, according to both national studies and studies in Utah.[29] *Surveys of Utah child care providers in 1995 found that many do not get paid sick leave or vacation time, or have any health insurance or pension plan.*

Most employees in Utah's licensed child care centers received minimal benefits:

- *61 percent of the centers surveyed paid no sick leave for employees,*
- *50 percent of the centers had no paid holidays,*
- *40 percent of the centers had no paid vacation days,*
- *51 percent did not offer health insurance, and*
- *Only 19 percent offered retirement or pension plans.*[30]

Similarly, family child care providers in Utah reported they had few benefits:

- *66 percent reported not being paid when a child was sick,*
- *82 percent reported not being paid when a child went on vacation,*
- *94 percent did not have vacation leave built into their fee schedule,*
- *20 percent did not have health insurance (and the remaining 80 percent were covered primarily through their spouse's employer), and*
- *Only about 9 percent of Utah's family child care providers put any of their minimal earnings into a retirement account in 1995, and about half (51 percent) did not contribute to Social Security or Medicare.*[31]

- As low as child care workers' salaries are in general, family child care providers face particularly great financial hardship, as they earn poverty level wages. A study of family child care providers in Utah found, on average, that these child care workers only made $2,000 above expenses in 1995, and more than one out of every four (27 percent) family child care providers made less than $500 above expenses.[32] [Given that family child care providers run small businesses in their home, it is more appropriate to examine their earnings above expenses rather than their average gross income. However, their income is still extremely low even when examining gross income (before taking out the expense of running a family child care home), which averaged only $8,000 a year.]

- Low wages and poor benefits are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in Utah:
  - ⇒ As many as two out of every five (39 to 40 percent) family child care providers in Provo[33] and Ogden[34] are estimated to go out of business each year.
  - ⇒ In 1995, Utah child care center directors reported that for every 13 teachers employed, an average of *five* left within a year—a turnover rate of 39 percent. Almost a quarter of the teachers (22 percent) had worked at the center for less than six months.[35]

  In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[36]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Utah.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in Utah. In 1997, only about 14 of Utah's child care centers were accredited. Only one of eight licensed centers in Provo, and neither of the two licensed centers in Richfield, were accredited.[37]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Utah face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

Many families in Utah have trouble finding good child care in their communities.

- Families in some parts of Utah had little or no access to licensed child care programs. In 1995, ten out of 29 Utah counties did not have any licensed child care centers available to families, and three counties were without *any* type of licensed child care (including licensed family child care homes).[38]
- State experts report that Utah has a critical lack of child care options for infants, school-age and children with special needs, as well as for care during nontraditional hours (evening and weekend care).[39]

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Utah school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Utah families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 50,813 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Utah live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[40]
- Utah children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[41] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[42] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[43] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many

communities. In Utah, only one out of ten public schools (674 or 10 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[44]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Utah.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[45] This means as many as 17,400 babies in Utah are in child care if national patterns hold true.[46]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Utah's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping babies and toddlers grow, Utah allows a caregiver in a center to care for as many as seven two-year-olds (age 27 months) alone. It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, play, and care for seven active two-year-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency.[47]
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Utah to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Utah in 1997 averaged $4,351, but could cost as much as $5,408.[48]
- A recent survey of Utah child care providers found that only half provided infant care. Of the providers that took care of infants, two-thirds (67 percent) reported having a waiting list for parents wanting infant care. The average length of the waiting list was over seven months.[49]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Utah

Number of children younger than one[50]	38,740
Number of children younger than six[51]	224,907
Number of children ages six to 17[52]	453,896
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[53]	17,400
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[54]	134,900
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[55]	57%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[56]	76%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Utah

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty) [57]	198,030
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Utah[58]	$2,010

Annual Child Care Costs in Utah[59]

Child Care Centers (1997)

	Statewide		Provo		Richfield	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,351	$5,408	$4,837	$5,085	$4,420	$4,680
4 years	$3,266	$4,160	$3,488	$4,008	$3,055	$3,120
8 years[60]	$3,079	n.a.	$2,995	$3,534	$2,995	$2,995

Family Child Care Homes (1997)

	Statewide		Provo		Richfield	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$3,597	$5,850	$3,836	$5,265	$3,420	$4,680
4 years	$3,145	$5,200	$3,722	$4,786	$2,887	$4,329
8 years	$2,624	n.a.	$1,941	$2,396	$1,917	$2,216

Many Children in Utah Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Utah require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children? [61]	No
Does Utah require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children? [62]	Yes
Average salary for a child care worker in Utah in 1996[63]	$12,280
Annual turnover rate for family child care providers in Provo, Utah[64]	40%
Number of child care centers in Utah that were accredited as of 1997[65]	14

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Utah[66]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[67]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	4	3-5	Yes
27 months	7	4-6	No
3 years	12	7-10	No
4 years	15	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in Utah

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[68]	320
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[69]	235
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[70]	2,455
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[71]	10%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Governor's Office of Planning & Budget, Utah Population Estimates Committee, 1994 cited in Forsgren, *A Status Report On Child Care in Utah, a 1995 Report*, (Salt Lake City, UT: Utah State Department of Human Services, Office of Licensing, 1995), p. 4.

[3] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[4] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[5] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[6] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[7] O'Neill, "Juggling child care, work," Ogden, UT: *The Utah Standard-Examiner*, April 21, 1996.

[8] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[9] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[10] Statewide cost data from Connections for Children, Weber State University, Ogden, UT and data for costs in Provo and Richfield from Family Connections Child Care Resource and Referral, Orem, UT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[11] Statewide cost data from Connections for Children, Weber State University, Ogden, UT and data for costs in Provo and Richfield from Family Connections Child Care Resource and Referral, Orem, UT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[12] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[15] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[16] J.E.D.I. for Women, *Caring for Our Children: A Survey of Child Care Providers in Utah*, April 1998.

[17] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[18] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[19] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[20] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[21] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[22] Harrie, "Child care the center of attention; Utah: State support falls short, advocates claim," Salt Lake City, UT: *The Salt Lake Tribune*, October 24, 1997, p. A1.

[23] Fahys, "Lawmakers Suggest Easing Day-Care Rules," Salt Lake City, UT: *The Salt Lake Tribune*, November 19, 1997.

[24] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools. (October 16, 1997).

[25] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[26] Wright and Ord, *Utah Center Child Care Survey, 1995; Salary and Benefits of Child Care Workers* (Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah, Utah Office of Child Care, 1995), p. 19.

[27] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[28] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[29] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[30] Hobbs, "A Day In The Life of Day Care...," Salt Lake City, UT: *The Salt Lake Tribune*, December 7, 1997, p. J1.

[31] Forsgren, *A Status Report On Child Care in Utah, a 1995 Report* (Salt Lake City, UT: Utah State Department of Human Services, Office of Licensing, 1995), p. 17.

[32] Information based on 1995 Survey of Child-Care Salaries and Benefits conducted by Cheryl Wright, associate professor of family and consumer studies at the University of Utah. Cited in Forsgren, *A Status Report On Child Care in Utah, a 1995 Report* (Salt Lake City, UT: Utah State Department of Human Services, Office of Licensing, 1995), p. 17.

[33] Information provided by Family Connections Child Care Resource and Referral, Orem, UT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[34] Information provided by Connections for Children, Ogden, UT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[35] Information based on 1995 Survey of Child-Care Salaries and Benefits conducted by Cheryl Wright, associate professor of family and consumer studies at the University of Utah. Cited in Forsgren, *A Status Report On Child Care in Utah, a 1995 Report* (Salt Lake City, UT: Utah State Department of Human Services, Office of Licensing, 1995), p. 17.

[36] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[37] Information on the number of accredited programs from the Family Connections Child Care Resource and Referral, Orem, UT; collected through a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[38] Forsgren, *A Status Report On Child Care in Utah, a 1995 Report* (Salt Lake City, UT: Utah State Department of Human Services, Office of Licensing, 1995), p. 1.

[39] Forsgren, *A Status Report On Child Care in Utah, a 1995 Report* (Salt Lake City, UT: Utah State Department of Human Services, Office of Licensing, 1995), p. 1.

[40] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[41] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[42] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[43] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[44] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[45] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[46] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[47] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[48] Statewide cost data from Connections for Children, Weber State University, Ogden, UT and data for costs in Provo and Richfield from Family Connections Child Care Resource and Referral, Orem, UT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[49] J.E.D.I. for Women, *Caring for Our Children: A Survey of Child Care Providers in Utah,* April 1998.

[50] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[51] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[52] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[53] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[54] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[55] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[56] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[57] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from US Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: US Department of Commerce).

[58] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[59] Statewide cost data from Connections for Children, Weber State University, Ogden, UT and data for costs in Provo and Richfield from Family Connections Child Care Resource and Referral, Orem, UT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[60] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[61] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[62] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[63] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[64] Information provided by the Family Connections Child Care Resource and Referral, Orem, UT; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[65] Information on the number of accredited programs from the Family Connections Child Care Resource and Referral, Orem, UT, collected through a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, December 1997.

[66] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[67] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[68] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[69] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[70] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[71] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

WASHINGTON:
CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Washington parents.

- Every day, about 280,400 children younger than six are in child care in Washington if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Washington work to help support their families. An estimated 57 percent of Washington mothers with children younger than six, and 76 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Washington and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

> *"The need for high-quality, affordable child care is everybody's business. Employers rely on parents as employees, and employees must be able to depend on child care."*
>
> *Editorial by former Mayor of Seattle Norman Rice*
> *and Metropolitan King County Executive Ron Sims,*
> *The Seattle Times, October 24, 1997*[6]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Washington.

Child care is costly for many families in Washington.

- Child care often costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Washington in 1997 was $2,928[7]—about three-fifths the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center.
- Many families in Washington earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Washington with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 316,710 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[8]

600

- In Washington, child care for one four-year-old in a child care center cost $4,992 on average in 1996. Child care is expensive for families whether they live in urban or rural areas. The average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Seattle was $6,136, and the average cost in Chelan and Douglas Counties was $4,108.[9] These expenses are for only one child—families with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Washington[10]

Child Care Centers (1996)

	Statewide		Seattle		Chelan and Douglas Counties	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$6,708	$12,220	$8,840	$12,220	$4,888	$6,240
4 years	$4,992	$9,360	$6,136	$9,412	$4,108	$5,200
8 years[11]	$3,989	$7,499	$4,972	$7,499	$2,360	$4,193

Family Child Care Homes (1996)

	Statewide		Seattle		Chelan and Douglas Counties	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$5,356	$14,352	$6,916	$14,352	$3,952	$5,720
4 years	$4,576	$14,352	$5,824	$14,352	$3,588	$7,020
8 years	$3,366	$8,733	$4,241	$8,733	$2,600	$6,589

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in Washington, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *55 percent* of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in Washington are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Washington ranks in the bottom half of states in making low-income working families eligible for child care assistance. In January 1998, the state only allowed families with incomes below $23,328 (for a family of three) to be eligible for any child care help, although federal law allows the state to serve families with incomes up to $36,711. Washington's income cutoff is lower than that in a number of states, including California and Oregon, where families earning over $25,000 can still qualify for child care assistance.[12]
- Even with Washington's low income cutoffs, the state is not confident that all eligible families know they can get child care assistance, or that it could serve all eligible families if they did know they could get child care help.[13]
- Seattle and King County each have locally-funded programs to provide child care assistance to families with incomes just above the cutoff for assistance from the state. Unfortunately, more of these low-income families need child care assistance than can be served, as demonstrated by the fact that 350 families are on a one-year waiting list for assistance in Seattle and 200 families are on a two-year waiting list for assistance in King County.[14]
- Low-income families who do not have access to child care assistance face numerous challenges. A 1995 survey found that Washington families unable to receive assistance had more difficulties with child care, were working fewer hours, and were three times more likely

to use unlicensed child care compared with similar families who were receiving child care subsidies.[15]

- Washington does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 65 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Washington spent 37 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[16]

Many Washington families fortunate enough to receive child care assistance still face financial hardship and limited options due to inadequate state policies.

- Low-income families receiving child care assistance are still required to make substantial contributions toward the cost of care. Washington state's child care copayment schedule leaves moderate-wage workers short of what they need to support their families. A single mother of two earning $1,667 per month pays $144 per month for child care and is left with $316 per month less than is necessary to pay for housing, food, transportation, taxes and health care.[17]
- As of January 1998, the amount that Washington would pay for child care for families receiving assistance was below the rates charged by many providers in each community.[18] As a result, providers in Washington may be reluctant to accept children whose care is subsidized, leaving low-income families with few options as they search for child care. In contrast, a number of other states, including nearby states such as Montana and Nevada, paid at levels that would allow families receiving child care subsidies a broader range of choices than in Washington.[19]

III) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Washington are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Washington affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[20] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[21] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[22]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Washington.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Washington's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Washington—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Washington's children from harm.

- Washington is one of the many states do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, for example, the state allowed a caregiver to care for as many seven two-year-olds (27 months) alone, although early childhood experts recommend no more than four to six.[23] This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.

Health and safety protections are needed to ensure the well-being of children in care

While Washington does not fully protect children's health and safety in child care, it does better than some other states, at least in certain areas. For instance, before she began caring for children in her home three years ago, one provider in Vancouver had to install smoke detectors, practice fire drills, take first-aid training, ban smoking and open her home to an inspection. None of this would have been necessary in across the river in Oregon. Washington providers are thankful for the state's health and safety regulations for family child care providers, typically women who open their homes to small numbers of children. "You have to have high standards," a provider said, "These are our children we're talking about."[24]

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[25] Washington is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[26] It is also one of 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior training.[27] The Washington state legislature has passed a law to require that child care providers receive training once they have started caring for children, but the providers still do not have to receiving training *before* they begin working with children.[28]

- Washington recognized the need for better-qualified early childhood education teachers when it recently enacted a training requirement. However, it only appropriated one-tenth as much to pay for this training as is spent on public school teachers. The appropriation provides about $32 for training per child care teacher, as opposed to $3,000 spent on professional development per public school teacher (kindergarten through 12th grade).[29]

- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[30] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Washington was only $14,380.[31] Furthermore, national studies of child care providers find that they tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[32]

- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in Washington. For example, a study of salaries and turnover rates for child care staff in Seattle found turnover rates of 29 percent for child care teachers, and 55 percent for child care assistants.[33] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[34]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Washington.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs. Yet such programs are scarce in Washington. In 1997, only about 109 of Washington's 1,734 licensed child care centers (or 6 percent) were accredited.[35]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Washington face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Washington school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Washington families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 150,527 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Washington live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[36]
- Washington children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[37] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[38] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[39] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.
- Investing in after-school options can make a difference for children. Because of a concerted focus on after-school care in Seattle, about three-quarters of Seattle public elementary schools have school-based care programs operated by community child-care providers, and all Seattle public middle schools have free after-school activities two to three days a week, coordinated by Seattle Parks and Recreation Department.[40] However, such programs are not available to many children living in other parts of the state.

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Washington.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[41] This means as many as 34,000 babies in Washington are in child care if national patterns hold true.[42]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Washington's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, while a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping very young children grow, Washington allows a single caregiver to care for seven 18-month-old toddlers. In comparison, early childhood experts recommend that a single caregiver be responsible for no more than three to five toddlers this age.[43] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, diaper, play, and

care for seven active 18-month-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency such as a fire.

- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Washington to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Washington in 1996 averaged $6,708 per year, but could cost as much as $12,220 per year.[44]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Washington

Number of children younger than one[45]	75,656
Number of children younger than six[46]	467,380
Number of children ages six to 17[47]	969,424
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[48]	34,000
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[49]	280,400
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[50]	57%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[51]	76%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Washington

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[52]	316,710
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Washington[53]	$2,928

Annual Child Care Costs in Washington[54]

Child Care Centers (1996)

	Statewide		Seattle		Chelan and Douglas Counties	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$6,708	$12,220	$8,840	$12,220	$4,888	$6,240
4 years	$4,992	$9,360	$6,136	$9,412	$4,108	$5,200
8 years[55]	$3,989	$7,499	$4,972	$7,499	$2,360	$4,193

Family Child Care Homes (1996)

	Statewide		Seattle		Chelan and Douglas Counties	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$5,356	$14,352	$6,916	$14,352	$3,952	$5,720
4 years	$4,576	$14,352	$5,824	$14,352	$3,588	$7,020
8 years	$3,366	$8,733	$4,241	$8,733	$2,600	$6,589

Many Children in Washington Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Washington require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[56]		No
Does Washington require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[57]		No
Average salary for a child care worker in Washington in 1996[58]		$14,380
Annual turnover rates for child care providers in Seattle:[59]	child care teachers	29%
	child care assistants	55%
Percentage of child care centers in Washington that were accredited as of 1997[60]		6%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Washington[61]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[62]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	4	3-4	Yes
18 months	7	3-5	No
27 months	7	4-6	No
3 years	10	7-10	Yes
4 years	10	8-10	Yes

Other Child Care Indicators in Washington

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[63]	1,734
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[64]	8,725
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[65]	20%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Rice and Sims, "Affordable Child Care Is Everybody's Business," Seattle, WA: *The Seattle Times*, October 24, 1997, p. B5.

[7] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[8] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[9] Information from Washington State Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Tacoma, WA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[10] Information from Washington State Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Tacoma, WA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[11] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Information from Elizabeth Bonbright Thompson of the Washington State Child Care Resource and Referral Network in Tacoma, WA, April 29, 1998.

[15] Phillips, *Child Care for Low-Income Families: A Summary of Two Workshops* (Washington, DC: Board on Children and Families, National Research Council, 1995).

[16] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[17] University of Washington, "Financing Quality Child Care In Washington," *Washington's Kids Count* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington, October 1997).

[18] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[19] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[20] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[21] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[22] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[23] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[24] Blackmun, "Lax laws put kids at risk," Portland, OR: *The Oregonian*, November 5, 1996.

[25] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools (October 16, 1997).

[26] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[27] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[28] Information from Elizabeth Bonbright Thompson of the Washington State Child Care Resource and Referral Network in Tacoma, WA, April 29, 1998.

[29] University of Washington, "Financing Quality Child Care In Washington," *Washington's Kids Count* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington, October 1997).

[30] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[31] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[32] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[33] *A Decade of Change in Center-Based Child Care*, Center for the Child Care Workforce, Washington, DC, as reported in *Current Data on Child Care Salaries and Benefits in the United States*, Center for the Child Care Workforce (Washington, DC: Center for the Child Care Workforce, March 1998).

[34] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[35] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[36] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[37] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[38] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[39] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[40] Rice and Sims, "Affordable Child Care Is Everybody's Business," Seattle, WA: *The Seattle Times*, October 24, 1997, p. B5.

[41] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[42] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[43] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[44] Information from Washington State Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Tacoma, WA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[45] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[46] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[47] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[48] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[49] National Center for Education Statistics. (October 1996). *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Data also from Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[50] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[51] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[52] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[53] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[54] Information from Washington State Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Tacoma, WA; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[55] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[56] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[57] Azer and Capraro. (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[58] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[59] *A Decade of Change in Center-Based Child Care*, Center for the Child Care Workforce, Washington, DC, as reported in *Current Data on Child Care Salaries and Benefits in the United States*, Center for the Child Care Workforce (Washington, DC: Center for the Child Care Workforce, March 1998).

[60] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[61] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[62] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[63] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[64] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[65] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

WYOMING:

CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

I) CHILD CARE ABC'S: The need for child care and early education has become a fact of life for many Wyoming parents.

- Every day, about 22,800 children younger than six are in child care in Wyoming if national patterns hold true. This is three out of five young children—and nearly half of all children younger than three—who spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[1] Children enter care as early as six weeks of age and may be in care for 40 hours a week until they reach school age.
- Most mothers in Wyoming work to help support their families. An estimated 61 percent of Wyoming mothers with children younger than six, and 77 percent of women with children between the ages of six and 17, are in the labor force.[2]
- For many mothers in Wyoming and across the country, work is not optional. Nationally, the majority (55 percent) of working women provide half or more of their household income,[3] about half of America's families with young children earn less than $35,000 per year,[4] and one out of three children of working mothers are poor even though their mothers work or *would* be poor if their mothers did not work.[5]

II) CHILD CARE COSTS: Quality child care is unaffordable for many working families in Wyoming.

Child care is costly for many families in Wyoming.

- Child care easily costs more than a college education at a public university. The average annual cost of public college tuition in Wyoming in 1997 was $2,144[6]—less than three-fifths the average cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Casper.
- Many families in Wyoming earn too little to be able to afford the quality child care their children need. Families in Wyoming with both parents working full-time at the federal minimum wage earn only $21,400 per year. There are about 38,640 children younger than 13 who live in low-income families (with incomes below 200 percent of poverty, or about $27,000 for a family of three).[7]
- In Wyoming, child care for a preschooler or infant can easily cost an average of $3,000 to $5,000 per year. For example, the average annual cost of care for a four-year-old in a center in Casper in 1997 was $3,848 (with fees as high as $4,992), and costs were higher for infants.[8] These expenses are for only one child—families with more than one child in care spend significantly more.

Annual Cost of Child Care in Casper, Wyoming (1997)[9]

	Child Care Centers		Family Child Care Homes	
Age of child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,784	$5,824	$3,900	$4,420
4 years	$3,848	$4,992	$3,380	$3,900
8 years[10]	n.a.	n.a.	$2,037	$2,396

- To buy child care for an infant and a four-year-old in a child care center at the average price in Casper, a two-parent family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage ($21,400 a year before taxes) would have to spend *40 percent* of their income for child care.

Many low-income working families in Wyoming are unable to get the child care assistance they need to work and help their children thrive.

- Wyoming ranks among the bottom 10 states in making low-income families eligible for child care assistance. As of January 1998, 44 states allowed families with higher incomes to receive state subsidies. Only those low-income working families earning less than $17,740 (for a family of three) are eligible for any help in paying for child care in Wyoming, although federal law allows the state to serve families earning up to $32,800.[11] Wyoming's cutoff is lower than the cutoff in many neighboring states, including Utah, Nebraska, and Colorado.[12]
- Wyoming reports that some families who are eligible for assistance may not know they can get help paying for child care.[13]
- Wyoming does not invest enough to help families pay for the good care that children need. The state spent only 18 cents out of every $100 in state tax revenues on child care and early education in 1994—among the lowest investment levels in the country. Despite the critical importance of brain development in the first three years of life, Wyoming spent 169 times as much in state funds on higher education than on child care and early education.[14]

Parents cannot maintain their independence without child care assistance

"Being a single mother, a full-time student, and having to work isn't easy and is a lot of stress. Day care is so expensive that if I had to pay for it, there would be no sense in my working, because my whole paycheck would go to daycare."[15]

A Wyoming parent receiving child care assistance

II) CHILD CARE QUALITY: Although child care shapes children's futures, too many children in Wyoming are in care that may be harmful to their development, health, and safety.

- Every day, the quality of the child care in Wyoming affects the way children develop and grow. A recent Carnegie Corporation study confirmed that the quality of child care has an impact on children's well-being and ability to learn.[16] While research shows that *good* quality child care can help children's development in a range of areas (including language, social skills, relationships with teachers, and self-perception),[17] it also shows that children in *poor* quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults.[18]

Basic health and safety protections for children in child care are inadequate in Wyoming.

- It is important to protect the health and safety of Wyoming's children who are in child care. To meet this critical goal, Wyoming—like all states—must ensure that child care providers meet basic health and safety protections, and that these protections are adequately enforced. Such efforts (such as ensuring that providers have CPR and first aid training, that there are no safety hazards, and that there are not too many children per teacher) protect Wyoming's children from harm.

- Wyoming is one of many states that do not adequately protect their children. In 1997, for example, the state met recommended levels for the number of children a single caregiver could care for in a child care center for only *two* of the six age groups examined. For example, the state allowed a caregiver in a center to care for as many as 15 four-year-olds alone, although early childhood experts recommend no more than eight to 10. This makes it extremely difficult for providers to give children the one-on-one attention they need.[19]

- The Wyoming Department of Family Services, Child Care Licensing Unit has only four full-time and four part-time inspectors for the entire state. Each member of this small full-time staff has approximately 120 cases to monitor—a very high caseload given the large geographical area that each licensing inspector must cover. Although it was debated in the most recent legislative session, the part-time staff positions were not expanded into full-time.[20] The licensing unit remains understaffed, making it difficult to ensure the health and well-being of the thousands of Wyoming children in child care.

High turnover rates, low wages, and inadequate training for child care providers threaten the quality of care.

- Staff education and training are critical in improving children's experiences in child care. Although hairdressers are required to complete 1,500 hours of training at an accredited school before they get a license,[21] Wyoming is one of 40 states that do not require providers who care for children in their homes to have *any* early childhood training prior to serving children.[22] It is also one of 32 states that allow teachers in child care centers to start work without prior training.[23]

- Wyoming providers are not only allowed to start caring for children without prior training, but they can also continue to care for children for several months without receiving the training they need to ensure the health and safety of children in their care. After opening a family child care home in Wyoming, a provider has six months to obtain first aid and CPR training, and a full year to meet the eight hours of training necessary each year to maintain their registered status.[24]

- Professional, quality care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care teachers and providers do not earn as much as bus drivers ($20,150) or garbage collectors ($18,100)—or even bartenders ($14,450).[25] In 1996, the average annual wage of child care workers in Wyoming was only $10,380 (only slightly above minimum wage).[26]

- National studies of child care providers find that, in addition to earning low wages, they also tend to receive no benefits or paid leave.[27] For example, a study of Wyoming child care workers found that only 13 percent of teaching assistants and 20 percent of child care teachers receive health insurance through their jobs.[28]

- Low wages are closely linked to rapid turnover rates among child care providers, which breaks the stable relationship that children need to have with their caregivers to feel safe and secure. Turnover rates are high among child care providers in Wyoming. A recent survey of child care staff in the state found that more than one out of every four child care teachers (27 percent), and more than two out of five child care assistants (41 percent) left their jobs in the survey year.[29] In contrast, turnover rates for public school teachers nationwide are only 6.6 percent.[30]
- The survey found that the child care workforce in Wyoming is "turbulent"—with almost three-quarters (73 percent) of all teaching assistants having been at their job under two years, and 56 percent having been at their job under one year. Even among child care teachers, who earn more, there was significant movement—39 percent of all teachers had been at their job less than two years, and 29 percent had been at their job less than one year.[31]

Other evidence demonstrates problems with the quality of child care in Wyoming.

- Many parents want their children to get the high quality care provided by nationally accredited child care programs—yet such programs are scarce in Wyoming. In 1997, only about 36 of Wyoming's 223 licensed child care centers (or 16 percent) were accredited.[32]

IV) CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: Families across Wyoming face difficulties finding quality, affordable care. The lack of such care is even greater for some groups of families, including families with school-age children and families with children younger than three.

Many families in Wyoming have trouble finding good child care in their communities.

- Local child care resource and referral agencies can help parents with the difficult task of finding the child care they want. Yet many Wyoming parents lack access to this type of help, since there is only one resource and referral agency available. Although the agency occasionally helps families in other parts of the state, it does not have enough resources to provide extensive services to families beyond its home community of Casper and Natrona County.[33] Many other states invest in a statewide network of such agencies to ensure that families have access to the information they need.

The scarcity of good after-school options leaves many Wyoming school-age children home alone and at risk of harm.

- Many Wyoming families with school-age children are low-income and have difficulty affording child care. For example, the Census Bureau estimates that 12,855 school-age children (ages five to 17) in Wyoming live in families with incomes below the poverty line ($13,300 for a family of three in 1997).[34]
- Wyoming children are among the nearly five million children nationwide who are home alone after school each week,[35] during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks.[36] However, studies show that children who are left unsupervised after school are at greater risk of

problem behaviors such as smoking and substance abuse[37] and that constructive activities can keep children out of trouble.

- Good after-school options in schools, churches, and community organizations can help children and teens do well in school and stay out of trouble, but they are inadequate in many communities. In Wyoming, only one in nine public schools (411 or 11 percent) offered extended-day programs in 1993-1994. Nationwide, this problem is even more serious in low-income neighborhoods.[38]

Our youngest children are particularly vulnerable to poor care, yet quality affordable care for children younger than three is scarce in Wyoming.

- Many of our youngest and most vulnerable children are in child care—nationwide, almost half of all babies younger than 12 months are regularly spending their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.[39] This means as many as 2,700 babies in Wyoming are in child care if national patterns hold true.[40]
- Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first three years of life, and that their experiences during these critical early years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. The quality of the care Wyoming's young children receive affects the way they think, learn, and behave.
- Far too many of our youngest children are not getting the quality care they need. For example, although a close nurturing relationship with an attentive caregiver is critical to helping babies grow, Wyoming allows a single caregiver to care for five nine-month-old babies. In contrast, early childhood experts recommend no more than three or four babies this age per adult.[41] It is hard to imagine how any one adult—no matter how highly skilled—could adequately nurture, feed, diaper, play, and care for five active nine-month-olds alone, much less be able to ensure their safety during an emergency such as a fire.
- Care for infants is more costly than for older children—which makes it even more difficult for families in Wyoming to be able to afford the quality care their children need to thrive. Child care for a 12-month-old in a child care center in Casper in 1997 averaged $4,784, but could cost as much as $5,824.[42]
- There are shortages of infant care throughout Wyoming, according to information gathered from providers in several counties across the state:
  - ⇒ A provider doing referrals for the local child care association in Lander (Fremont County) cited only three openings for infants in local programs. She knew of three families each of whom had to place their older children and younger children with separate providers (rather than having their children be cared for in the same program, as they wanted) because of inadequate infant options.[43]
  - ⇒ Spaces for infants are also limited in Albany, Laramie, Campbell and Natrona Counties. Providers often have waiting lists for infants, and when they do have openings they do not have to advertise because of the influx of inquiries.[44]
  - ⇒ Further evidence of the critical shortage of infant care is provided by Child and Nutrition Services in Casper, which reports that, on average, only 5 percent of the open child care slots are available to infants.[45]

CHILD CARE FACTS AT A GLANCE

Children and Families in Wyoming

Number of children younger than one[46]	6,103
Number of children younger than six[47]	37,952
Number of children ages six to 17[48]	95,323
If national trends hold true, estimated number of:	
children under one cared for by someone other than their parents[49]	2,700
children under six cared for by someone other than their parents[50]	22,800
Percentage of mothers with children under six in the labor force[51]	61%
Percentage of mothers with children ages six to 17 in the labor force[52]	77%

Child Care Not Affordable for Many Families in Wyoming

Number of children younger than 13 living in low-income families (< 200% of poverty)[53]	38,640
Earnings of two-parent families with both parents working full-time at minimum wage	$21,400
Average cost of tuition at a public university in Wyoming[54]	$2,144

Annual Child Care Costs in Casper, Wyoming (1997)[55]

	Child Care Centers		Family Child Care Homes	
Age of Child	Average	High	Average	High
12 months	$4,784	$5,824	$3,900	$4,420
4 years	$3,848	$4,992	$3,380	$3,900
8 years[56]	n.a.	n.a.	$2,037	$2,396

Many Children in Wyoming Do Not Get the Quality Child Care They Need

Does Wyoming require any training for teachers in child care centers prior to serving children?[57]	No
Does Wyoming require any training for family child care providers prior to serving children?[58]	No
Annual turnover rate for child care teachers in Wyoming in 1997[59]	27%
Average salary for a child care worker in Wyoming in 1996[60]	$10,380
Percentage of child care centers in Wyoming that were accredited as of 1997[61]	16%

Number of Children of Different Ages Allowed per Caregiver in Child Care Centers in 1997 in Wyoming[62]

Age of Child	Number of Children Allowed per Caregiver	Recommended Level[63]	Does State Requirement Meet Recommended Level?
9 months	5	3-4	No
18 months	5	3-5	Yes
27 months	8	4-6	No
3 years	10	7-10	Yes
4 years	15	8-10	No

Other Child Care Indicators in Wyoming

Number of licensed child care centers in 1997[64]	223
Number of regulated group child care homes in 1997[65]	415
Number of regulated family child care homes in 1997[66]	416
Percentage of public schools offering extended-day programs 1993-1994[67]	11%

SOURCES

[1] National data from National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers.* National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996). Estimates of the number of children in each state in child care based on calculations by the Children's Defense Fund, applying NCES data to Census population data: Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[2] Bureau of the Census. (1990). Census of Population and Housing, STF4. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

[3] Whirlpool Foundation Study by the Families and Work Institute, *Women: The New Providers* (NY, NY: Families and Work Institute, May 1995).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P60-197, *Money and Income in the United States: 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997).

[5] Calculations of data for 1996 from the 1997 Current Population Survey by the Children's Defense Fund.

[6] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys. October 1997.

[7] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995.* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[8] Information from Child Care Finder, Casper, WY; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[9] Information from Child Care Finder, Casper, WY; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[10] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[11] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[12] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[13] Adams, Schulman, and Ebb, *Locked Doors: States Struggling to Meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, March 1998).

[14] Adams and Poersch, *Who Cares? State Commitment to Child Care and Early Education.* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1996).

[15] This quote is taken from parent interviews conducted by local resource and referral agencies and other organizations. Cited in: *Adams and Poersch, Key Facts About Child Care and Early Education: A Briefing Book* (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1997), p. I-1.

[16] Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Executive Summary, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, August 1994), p. 4.

[17] Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Executive Summary* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[18] Testimony by Deborah Phillips before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, March 1, 1995.

[19] State requirements compared to levels recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. State licensing data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[20] Conversation with Heidi Paakkonen, Casper, WY: Children and Nutrition Services, March 1998.

[21] Personal communication, Raymond Testa, Vice-Chairman of American Association of Cosmetology Schools (October 16, 1997).

[22] Forty states including the District of Columbia. Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[23] Azer and Capraro, *Data on Child Care Licensing*, (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[24] Conversation with Heidi Paakkonen, Casper, WY: Children and Nutrition Services, March 1998.

[25] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOL, January 1994).

[26] Data on child care workers wages from Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm. Note that BLS also reports data on the wages of "preschool teachers," which are—on average nationwide—$2.17 more an hour than those of child care workers. It is not clear, however, how preschool teachers are defined; it is likely that this category includes teachers hired by the public schools which tend to have higher wages than child care centers. Annual wage was calculated by CDF from hourly wage, assuming that child care providers work 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.

[27] Fact cited in National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, *Profile: The Child Care Work Force—NCECW Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: NCECW). Original source: Helburn et al., *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study: Technical Report (1995)* (Denver: University of Colorado, 1995).

[28] Wyoming P.A.R.E.N.T., *Wyoming Child Care Center and Home Child Care Provider Compensation, Retention and Preparedness Survey: April 1997*, (Cheyenne, WY: Wyoming P.A.R.E.N.T., September 1997).

[29] Wyoming P.A.R.E.N.T., *Wyoming Child Care Center and Home Child Care Provider Compensation, Retention and Preparedness Survey: April 1997*, (Cheyenne, WY: Wyoming P.A.R.E.N.T., September 1997).

[30] National Center for Education Statistics, *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey 1994-1995* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education).

[31] Wyoming P.A.R.E.N.T., *Wyoming Child Care Center and Home Child Care Provider Compensation, Retention and Preparedness Survey: April 1997*, (Cheyenne, WY: Wyoming P.A.R.E.N.T., September 1997).

[32] This reflects programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the most prevalent form of accreditation for child care centers. While some additional programs may have been accredited by other organizations, data were not available. Data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm.

[33] Conversation with Heidi Paakkonen, Casper, WY: Children and Nutrition Services, March 1998.

[34] Bureau of the Census. (1993). Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

[35] School-Age Child Care Project, "Factsheet on school-age children" (Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, September 1996).

[36] U.S. Department of Justice, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. DOJ, June 1997).

[37] Dwyer et al., "Characteristics of Eighth-Grade Students Who Initiate Self-Care in Elementary and Junior High School," *Pediatrics*, 86, 1990.

[38] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire). National data on incidence in low-income neighborhoods from *The Condition of Education: 1993* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[39] National Center for Education Statistics. *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*. National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: October 1996).

[40] Bureau of the Census. (1997). Population Estimates for July 1996. (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[41] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts.

[42] Information from Child Care Finder, Casper, WY; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[43] Information from Child Care Finder, Casper, WY; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[44] Information from Child Care Finder, Casper, WY; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[45] Conversation with Heidi Paakkonen, Casper, WY: Children and Nutrition Services, March 1998.

[46] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[47] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[48] Bureau of the Census. (1996). Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997). Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov.

[49] National Center for Education Statistics (October 1996) *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers* Washington, DC National Center for Education Statistics Data also from Bureau of the Census (1997) Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997) Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov

[50] National Center for Education Statistics (October 1996) *Child Care and Early Education Program Participation of Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers* Washington, DC National Center for Education Statistics Data also from Bureau of the Census (1996) Population Estimates for July 1996 (Released April 1997) Obtained on the World Wide Web at http://www.census.gov

[51] Bureau of the Census (1990) Census of Population and Housing, STF4 Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund

[52] Bureau of the Census (1990) Census of Population and Housing, STF4 Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund

[53] Estimate for the number of children younger than 13 below 200 percent of poverty was computed by multiplying Census Bureau state estimate of children younger than 19 below 200 percent of poverty by the nationwide ratio of poor children younger than 13 to poor children younger than 19 in 1996 Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, *Low Income Uninsured Children By State: Number and Percent of Children under 19 Years of Age, at or below 200 Percent of Poverty, by State: Three-Year Averages for 1993, 1994, and 1995* Data from March 1996, 1995, and 1994 Current Population Surveys. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce).

[54] Data on average university costs from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" and "Institutional Characteristics" surveys October 1997

[55] Information from Child Care Finder, Casper, WY; collected by a joint survey of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, February 1998.

[56] Annual school-age child care costs were calculated from hourly and/or weekly costs reported by resource and referral agencies for a joint survey by the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The annual costs include costs for before- and after-school care during school days and costs for care during summer vacations and school holidays. In calculating school-age costs, CDF assumed that children of working parents are in before- and after-school care for a total of 3.5 hours per day, 180 days per year and in full-day care (8 hours per day) during 71 non-school weekdays (the remaining days would be either weekends or the parents' vacation time).

[57] Azer and Capraro (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[58] Azer and Capraro (1997). *Data on Child Care Licensing* (Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, 1997).

[59] Wyoming P.A.R.E.N.T., *Wyoming Child Care Center and Home Child Care Provider Compensation, Retention and Preparedness Survey: April 1997*, (Cheyenne, WY: Wyoming P.A.R.E.N.T., September 1997).

[60] From Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996 Occupational Employment and Wage Data—found on the BLS website address http://stats.bls.gov/oes/state/oesstate.htm.

[61] Percentage of licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAEYC calculated by CDF based on: data on the number of programs accredited by NAEYC from NAEYC National Academy of Early Childhood Programs: Summary of Accredited Programs/Programs in Self Study—on the website www.america-tomorrow.com:80/naeyc/accreditate/accrdsum.htm; and data on number of licensed child care centers from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[62] Data from the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts

[63] Level recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[64] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[65] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[66] Data from the Children's Foundation, Washington, DC.

[67] State data from National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94 (School Questionnaire).

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

About the Children's Defense Fund

The Children's Defense Fund (CDF) exists to provide a strong and effective voice for all the children of America, who cannot vote, lobby, or speak for themselves. We pay particular attention to the needs of poor and minority children and those with disabilities. Our goal is to educate the nation about the needs of children and encourage preventive investment in children before they get sick, drop out of school, suffer family breakdown, or get into trouble.

CDF is a unique organization. CDF focuses on programs and policies that affect large numbers of children, rather than on helping families on a case-by-case basis. Our staff includes specialists in health, education, child welfare, mental health, child development, family income, and youth employment. CDF gathers data and disseminates information on key issues affecting children. We monitor the development and implementation of federal and state policies. We provide information, technical assistance, and support to a network of state and local child advocates, service providers, and public and private sector officials and leaders. We pursue an annual legislative agenda in the U.S. Congress and in states where we have offices. CDF educates hundreds of thousands of citizens annually about children's needs and responsible options for meeting those needs.

CDF is a national organization with roots in communities across America. Although our main office is in Washington, D.C., we reach out to towns and cities across the country to monitor the effects of changes in national and state policies and to help people and organizations concerned with what happens to children. CDF maintains state offices in Minnesota and Ohio, and local project offices in Marlboro County (South Carolina), Columbus, Greater Cincinnati, and New York City. CDF has developed cooperative projects with groups in many states.

The Black Community Crusade for Children (BCCC), developed by Black leaders and coordinated by CDF, is an initiative to mobilize the African American community behind a targeted effort to address the special problems facing Black children. The BCCC is part of CDF's overall work to ensure that *no* child is left behind and that *all* American children have a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, a Safe Start, and a Moral Start in life.

CDF is a private, nonprofit organization supported by foundations, corporate grants, and individual donations.

Children's Defense Fund
25 Years
LEAVE NO CHILD BEHIND.

25 E Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
www.childrensdefense.org